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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

EMILE BURNS — LABOUR'S NATIONAL PLAN

MAURICE CORNFORTH — SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT LAWS OF DIALECTICS

KATHARINE THOMSON — ELIZABETHAN POPULAR SONGS AND THE ENGLISH MUSICAL TRADITION

FRANK QUELON — ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

DISCUSSION:

REG BEECH — "THE THIRTIES"

D. LESSLIE — RUDYARD KIPLING RE-ESTIMATED

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Marxism Today

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Editorial Comments

TO listen to Labour supporters of "incomes policy" and Tory supporters of "get tough with the unions" one would imagine that Britain was almost the only country in the capitalist world where prices are soaring—all allegedly due of course to the workers' drive for increased wages and salaries.

Yet the *Ministry of Labour Gazette* (September 1965), comparing prices in a number of European countries in June 1965 with the same month of 1964, shows that some European countries are far outstripping Britain in price rises. There is for example the Netherlands, which once had a wages policy that was the admiration of capitalist economists everywhere. Yet from June 1964 to June 1965 its retail prices rose by 8 per cent. The same rise—8 per cent—is recorded in Sweden, which is often believed (quite wrongly) to have an incomes policy that keeps prices from rising. Other price rises as compared with June 1964 are: Italy 6 per cent; Luxembourg 5.18 per cent; Norway 6.2 per cent. The rise in the U.K. for the same period was 5.2 per cent.

This has some bearing on the speech that Mr. George Brown delivered at the Labour Party Conference last September. Mr. Brown harped on the well-known theme, that rising prices reduce the value of any wage increases which the workers may attain. This is perfectly true, but there is not the slightest reason for believing that the policy of Government intervention to prevent wages and salaries from rising, can stop the increased prices. Neither the Dutch tightly regulated control of wages and prices, nor the Swedish system of national negotiations between the T.U.C. and the employers' confederation, nor the fierce stop-go policy pursued in Italy, have prevented prices from rising.

There is one difference, however, that is noteworthy. In Britain, the unions (a large minority protesting) have agreed to the Government's prices and incomes policy. In Europe, the West German, French and Italian unions are resisting the imposition of an incomes policy in any shape or form.

The Common Market

We notice that Mr. Grimond and Mr. Heath are making the usual noises about Britain "getting into Europe", i.e. joining the Common Market. It is therefore worthwhile asking what would have happened had Britain got into the Common Market in 1963.

The necessary material for this will be found in a memorandum on "Imported Manufactures; an Inquiry into Competitiveness" issued recently by the National Economic Development Council. The facts show that imports of foreign manufactured goods into Britain have grown enormously faster than exports of British manufacturers.

Thus, while British exports of manufactures (in terms of money value) increased by 66 per cent between 1954 and 1964, imports of manufactures increased by 238 per cent.

In 1954 imports of manufactured goods into Britain were equivalent (in money value) to 25 per cent of Britain's exports of manufactures. In 1965 they had risen to 49.5 per cent.

Manufactured imports into Britain were 15 per cent of all imports in 1954. They were 30 per cent of all imports in 1964.

Now if Britain had got into the Common Market in 1963 this would have meant a reduction of the high British tariffs against foreign manufactured goods, and a truly enormous stimulus would have been given to imports. Of course, foreign tariffs would have been lowered to British exports, but as tariffs in Europe were generally lower than those in Britain, the gain to British exports as a result of Britain entering the Common Market would have been much less than the gain to foreign imports into Britain. The balance of trade would have moved with lightning rapidity against Britain.

Another argument for Britain entering the Common Market was that the countries there were expanding tremendously, that they were not resorting to any stop-go policies, and once Britain was in, it would share in this expansion. In fact the Common Market has seen some quite ferocious stop-go policies being operated in France, Italy and Belgium. Both are just beginning to work their way out of stagnation.

The moral seems to be that if the Tories had got Britain into the Common Market it would have been in an even bigger mess than it is today.

Nothing is therefore sillier than to imagine that entry into Europe makes any contribution to Britain's problems. Those who continue to put it forward as a panacea are simply charlatans.

Blessing or Curse?

The pound sterling is firmer, the gold reserves are building up, foreign short term funds are flowing back to London, and some Right Wing Labour

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leaders are preening themselves that their "tough" measures (on conventional Tory lines) are beginning to work.

Yet the inflow of foreign money is yet another proof that the Labour Government is allowing itself to be trussed up more thoroughly in an international financial strait-jacket.

It will be looking over its shoulder all the time, adapting all its policies to keeping these foreign funds in London. There will be a tendency to water down or drop any measure of social reform which is likely to frighten the speculators off. Changes in foreign policy will be opposed in order to maintain the confidence of the financiers. The only way to avoid this stalemate is to bring the utmost pressure on the Government to carry out the progressive policies to which it pledged itself in the General Election, and to cease all attempts to restrict the trade unions in the interests of the reactionary incomes policy.

Before the Tories start gloating on the sad position of the Labour Party, they have one question to answer, namely "How is it that the British capitalist economy is in such a vulnerable state that it can be pushed around the ring by bankers and speculators of all countries?"

That is the question which the Heaths and Maudlings, with their thirteen years of office, cannot answer. For throughout that period Britain sank lower and lower in the world League table and was many times more vulnerable to foreign pressure when they left office than when they entered it.

It is the attempt to perpetuate imperialist domination, through the policy of neo-colonialism, with its concomitant, the costly attempt to again make London the financial centre of the world, that has been a costly failure. Yet the Tory and Right Wing leaders never learn. They are clinging to the policies that have made Britain more vulnerable every year and have the utter brazen audacity to blame it all on the working class.

Where this type of policy has landed Britain is well described by the *Guardian's* correspondent at the United Nations:

> "Many shades of United Nations opinion have convinced themselves that Britain has become an American appendage, always trying to appease Washington, sometimes trying to do Washington's shady work. But even those who grant Britain a desire to steer an independent course, argue that she is caught in a stranglehold of economic dependence on the United States" (*Guardian*, October 4th).

Evidently these United Nations observers do not take seriously Mr. Wilson's statement that Britain has never agreed to follow the U.S. line on Vietnam because of U.S. assistance to the pound. Marxists, of course, understand that this is only one of the factors involved; that the desire to defend the British imperialist interests in South East Asia is an equally important factor. In any case one does not need to do a deal on such questions. The British government knows that on the basis of its present policy it is desperately dependent on the United States and so follows that policy servilely, independent of any deal.

Big Business in Britain

A Government publication which was speedily sold out and necessitated a second printing is *Company Assets, Income and Finance* 1965 (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 14s. 6d.). It deals with the fortunes of the 2,027 companies in manufacturing, distribution, construction and transport in the United Kingdom, starting with Imperial Chemical Industries with net assets of £894 million and an average of £125 million profit per annum for the last three years.

There are a series of summary tables at the end of the publication, which enable one, after doing a little homework, to estimate the degree to which a handful of large companies dominate certain industries.

If one cares to compare the data in this publication with that of the previous ones (with the same title) in 1957 and 1960, one can readily get a picture of the growth of the largest companies. There is a job that ought to be done, and quickly.

Vietnam Background

There can be no excuse of ignorance about the Vietnam background. More and more information and literature about the liberation struggle of the Vietnam people is coming to hand.

Those who want to understand the nature of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, of the government which it exercises in over two-thirds of South Vietnam territory, will find a vivid and first-hand account in Wilfred Burchett's *Vietnam: Inside Story of the Guerrilla War*[1] where he tells of the eight months that he spent last year with the guerrilla forces moving right up to the outskirts of Saigon.

The infamous record of American aggression and equally iniquitous record of British connivance and support is told in William Warbey's *Vietnam: the Truth*.[2]

The Foreign Languages Publishing House at Hanoi in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, has done excellent work in making available in

[1] Wilfred G. Burchett—"*Vietnam: Inside Story of the Guerrilla War*", International Publishers, New York, $4.95.

[2] William Warbey—"*Vietnam: the Truth*", Merlin Press, 10s. 6d., paperback; 18s. cloth.

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English a whole range of background and contemporary works by the political and cultural leaders of the country. They include President Ho Chi Minh's *Prison Diary*, General Vo Nguyen Giap's study of *Dien Bien Phu*, Le Duan's two volumes of studies *On The Socialist Revolution in Vietnam*, a work on *Building an Independent National Economy in Vietnam* by Doan Trong Truyen and Pham Thanh Vinh, and many others.[3]

Incidentally, the main documents of the April 1965 National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam are published under the title *Against Aggression* and contain the full text of the famous four points.

Four Points for Peace

On September 2nd, 1945, all over Vietnam, the people were celebrating the Proclamation of Independence and the foundation of the Democratic Republic. But within a few weeks French colonialist troops fired their first shots against the young Republic. Nine years of bitter and heroic struggle against French colonialism culminated in the victory of Dien Bien Phu and the signing in 1954 of the Geneva Agreement. Hardly had this been signed when American imperialism, already supporting French aggression, began its open intervention.

With over 130,000 American troops in South Vietnam, with the U.S. military build-up accelerating, with ever-increasing attacks on the North and savage "saturation" raids on the South, with the continued escalation of the war, what are the *real* conditions for peace in Vietnam?

At the celebration of the Twentieth Anniversary, Premier Pham Van Dong of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam made a fresh appeal:

> "We call on the peoples of the world, including the American people, to develop further the movement to stop the aggressive war in South Vietnam, put an end to the 'escalation' in attacks against North Vietnam, implement the Geneva Agreements, accept the four-point stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the stand expounded in the March 22nd, 1965, Statement of the South Vietnam National Front of Liberation. Only in this way could there be a genuine and lasting peace in this area and could peace be safeguarded in other parts of the world."

The four points have been so ignored, twisted and distorted in the capitalist press that one can never repeat them enough. The actual words of Prime Minister Pham Van Dong in his report of April 8th, 1965, to the National Assembly of the D.R.V. were as follows[4]

> "(1) Recognition of the heroic national rights of the Vietnamese people: peace, independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. According to the Geneva Agreements, the U.S. Government must withdraw from South Vietnam all U.S. troops, military personnel and weapons of all kinds, dismantle all U.S. military bases there, cancel its 'military alliance' with South Vietnam. It must end its policy of intervention and aggression in South Vietnam. According to the Geneva Agreements, the U.S. Government must stop its acts of war against North Vietnam, end definitely all encroachments on the territory and sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
>
> "(2) Pending the peaceful reunification of Vietnam, while Vietnam is still temporarily divided into two zones the military provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam must be strictly respected: the two zones must refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries, there must be no foreign military bases, troops and military personnel in their respective territory.
>
> "(3) The affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves, in accordance with the programme of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, without any foreign interference.
>
> "(4) The peaceful reunification of Vietnam is to be settled by the Vietnamese people in both zones, without any foreign interference."

"The Coach"

In Britain support for the Vietnam people has been growing steadily, is still growing, and needs to grow still faster. It has taken many different forms.

One of these has been the indefatigable Medical Aid coach, now becoming a familiar campaigning centre, and running under the auspices of the Young Communist League and its journal *Challenge*. Decorated with posters of the American bombing raids in Vietnam, of the casualties, the wounded, and the suffering that they cause, the coach has been continuously staffed by successive voluntary groups of young people (not only YCL'ers) from fourteen to thirty years old—driving, collecting, and speaking.

Its crews have held pithead meetings from South Wales to Scotland, factory gate gatherings from Brighton to Fife, dockyard rallies from Southampton to Clydeside, contacted thousands and thousands of people at street corner and shopping centre, public place and public house. In the first four months of its campaigning it has been present at many a public event and rally, from its first launching at Trafalgar Square to its (unofficial) attendance at the Blackpool Labour Party Conference.

Many, many local people have welcomed it—trade unionists, Labour Party, Communist and Liberal. Many of the older generation seeing it have recalled

[3] All available from Central Books and Collets.

[4] "*Against Aggression*", Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1965, pp. 66-67.

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the days of Spain and the Spanish aid campaign. In South Wales the coach was entered for the South Wales Miners' Gala and won second prize. In Bristol, around it, £100 was collected in four days. At Stockport it was given an official reception by the Labour controlled council.

The first cheque for £200 was handed at the House of Commons on July 25th to Renée Short, M.P., of the Vietnam Medical Aid Committee—the largest single donation received at that date.

A letter of gratitude for the coach's work has been received by *Challenge* from the permanent representative in Algeria of the Central Committee of the South Vietnam Liberation Front.

The coach continues its campaign. Good luck to it and the comrades who man it. For it expresses the deepest feelings of solidarity of British youth with the struggle of the people of Vietnam. Moreover, solidarity becomes a real thing when it is translated from words and feelings into action.

Linguistics and Dialectics

In the present issue appears an article by Maurice Cornforth on *Some Questions about Laws of Dialectics* which is likely to provoke both thought and controversy. These same questions are dealt with, from another angle, in his new book, *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*[5].

This book contains a very thorough examination of the dominant trend in contemporary British philosophy, a Marxist analysis of which has long been needed. It does not avoid the questions about logical theory which this philosophy raises and, while sharply critical of the linguistic philosophy as a whole, recognises the positive value of modern techniques of formal logic and linguistic analysis.

It contains a good deal more besides. The first part deals historically and critically with the whole development of the ideas of "British Empiricism" from which the philosophers' present preoccupation with questions about language emerged. And the third and concluding part deals with the problems of Marxism. Here Maurice Cornforth considers the bearing of the modern scientific development of logical theory on the understanding of dialectical materialism, and proceeds from that to treat problems of "socialist humanism" and of the Marxist approach to Ethics.

[5] Maurice Cornforth—*Marxism and Linguistic Philosophy*, Lawrence & Wishart, 55s.

Christopher Caudwell

Two re-issues of the works of Christopher Caudwell, who was killed at the age of thirty in the Spanish War in 1937, are due for publication this month—*The Concept of Freedom*, which contains six of his "Studies in a Dying Culture" plus a large part of "The Crisis in Physics"; and the *Poems*[6].

Caudwell was certainly one of the most original and creative, as well as one of the most controversial, of all the British Marxists of the 'thirties. His poems place him high in the ranks of the poets. The republication of these works shows that they retain all their freshness, creativeness, charm and contemporaneity. Indeed, much of the message—especially the brilliant analysis of "The Crisis in Physics", and his thoughts on the relations of the sciences and arts and on human values—seems even more apposite now than it was at the time it was first published.

Ten Thousand Years in Thirty

That the technological revolution which is now well under way, with nuclear power, automated factories, computers and space-rockets, has already had and will have very far-reaching social effects is a fact that is beginning to be recognised. The really tremendous scope and potentiality of this revolution is brought home in the new edition of Sam Lilley's *Men, Machines and History*, which Lawrence and Wishart are publishing at the end of this month.[7]

Tracing the entire development of technology from the first beginnings of agriculture to the present day, it reveals as sober fact that the scope of technological innovation since the second world war is just about equal to that of the whole previous ten thousand years. Never before has there been such a vast and rapid increase of men's powers. At the end of the book Dr. Lilley describes the benefits that will accrue to mankind once these powers are rationally used. His careful objective analysis presents an overwhelming case for Socialism.

This is one of the most informative and important books to have been published for some time, and readers of *Marxism Today* know how clearly and readably Dr. Lilley writes.

[6] *Concept of Freedom*, Lawrence & Wishart, 35s., and *Poems*, Lawrence & Wishart, 25s.

[7] Sam Lilley—*Man, Machines and History*, Lawrence & Wishart, 45s. (illustrated with photographs and diagrams).

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Labour's National Plan

Emile Burns

"IF we achieve the 25 per cent growth target by 1970, the extra output will be worth £8,000 million a year. . ." There follows a shopping list of how this considerable rise in national income ("gross domestic product") would be spent—strengthening the balance of payments and additional industrial investment £2,000 million; additional spending by the Government and local authorities "on such things as schools, roads, hospitals and houses" £1,500 million; increase in personal consumption, £4,500 million. (All of this at 1964 prices, so that if prices rise, so also will the amounts available.)

This is presented by the Government as an inspiring prospect, justifying "sacrifices" (by the workers).

Why was the target for growth in the six years 1965-1970 set at 25%, involving an average annual growth of 3.8% (lower in the earlier years, higher in the later years), and not at 50% or even a higher figure?

In December 1961 President Kennedy, through the Paris Conference of the "Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development", put forward "plans" for an annual growth of the capitalist economies by 4.3 per cent, reaching a total of 50% growth in ten years. Then the Tory-appointed National Economic Development Council early in 1963 decided to assume, for Britain, a 4 per cent annual growth from 1961 to 1966. As *The Times* (28.3.63) observed editorially:

> "The rate of 4 per cent a year between 1961 and 1966 is far higher than has been achieved over similar periods in the past—double the rate of the inter-war years and well above the post-war growth rate."

Shortly before the National Economic Plan was published, the O.E.C.D. issued a Report saying that a 4 per cent annual growth was too high for Britain, and called for lower production. And the National Institute's *Economic Review* declared that production should be slowed down to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent growth, and that in 1966 production should run "fairly flat."

Now in September 1965, undaunted by the experiences of the past, the Labour Government puts forward its "plan" to *assume* a growth rate of 3.8 per cent per annum, totalling 25 per cent in the six years to 1970.

What is the moral of all this? That the economic experts cannot imagine, in capitalist society, a rate of economic growth commensurable with the vast resources available in plant, materials, skilled labour and finance; and that their forward-looking guesses or "plans" have to be constantly scaled down to fit experience—the Labour Government's 3.8 per cent growth plan is described as "realistic", so that anything higher is unrealistic.

Compare this with the plans of the socialist countries, which experience has proved to be extremely realistic. These plans are based on an annual growth of around double the Labour Government's "plan" for Britain. In the Soviet Union, the national income was planned to increase by 150 per cent between 1961 and 1970, and the plan is being broadly fulfilled (i.e. underfulfilled in some items, overfulfilled in others) year by year; in the six years 1960-65 the national income of Rumania rose by 65 per cent; the average annual growth of the national income from 1966 to 1970 is planned at 7 per cent.

The essential difference is the difference between capitalism and socialism.

Here it is a "plan" for what its authors—unable to write "capitalism"—call a "market economy", though it is to be given "guidance" by the Government. Mr. George Brown, in his foreword to the short version of the plan, tells us:

> "*It isn't a Plan to tell us all what to do and when and how. That wouldn't be acceptable to a nation like ours. But it does show us what is necessary and possible.*"

In other words, the plan expresses at best a hope, if both the monopolists and the workers (but especially the workers) are prepared to play, that there's a better time coming (especially for the monopolists).

In the socialist countries the plans are real plans, based on State ownership of all industry and finance, and in essence administered by the State and its subordinate bodies. There are no capitalists to object to being told "what to do and when and how". And as for the workers, they take part in shaping the plan and seeing that it is carried out. Hence the plans of the socialist countries are in fact carried out. In such conditions the plans—and the achievements—can realise in fact their central aim: to satisfy the increasing material and spiritual needs of the people.

In fact, the economic growth in the socialist countries, if measured in the same way as in Britain, is even greater than appears on the surface. For in

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the socialist countries what is measured is *the growth in material production*, the growth in the mass of things produced. In Britain and other capitalist countries, the gross domestic product is not measured in things, but in incomes, so that for example a rise in the item "Pay in cash and in kind of the armed forces" would swell the gross domestic product.

The achievement of a 25 per cent increase between 1964 and 1970, *even if Labour's National Plan is successfully carried out*, is therefore even less of an inspiring aim in comparison with what a Socialist Britain could expect.

The Aims of Labour's Plan

The National Plan opens with "This is a plan to provide the basis for greater economic growth. An essential part of the plan is a solution to Britain's balance of payments". According to the National Institute's *Economic Review*, Britain's adverse balance of payments can only be righted by cutting down production. Mr. Callaghan's recent cuts seem to agree with this; but Mr. Brown sets us the "central challenge" of "correcting the balance of payments and achieving the surplus necessary to repay our debts, while at the same time fostering the rapid growth of the economy".

But what is the solution or correction to Britain's balance of payments deficit? And, moreover, how is Britain to repay the accumulated deficit, and to pay the interest involved? The treatment of these questions is one of the most unconvincing aspects of the National Plan.

Net Government expenditure abroad in 1964 is given as £555 million, *excluding interest payments*; various economies are promised, but in 1970 it is estimated that this item will still be £510 million (at 1964 prices). Net saving, only £45 million (evidently *excluding interest payments*).

Then net private investment in Britain from abroad is expected ("it is reasonable to envisage") to provide £75 million a year, while tax measures are expected to restrict British capital exports by £150 million (still leaving some £250 million). Imports are to rise less fast than in recent years, while exports (on the basis of answers from "industry") are to rise by 5½ per cent each year. The final result of these transactions is to make up a net favourable balance in 1970 amounting to £250 million.

Even if all these "expectations" are realised, it is exceedingly difficult to see how repayment between 1967 and 1970 of the £900 million "from the International Monetary Fund and from Switzerland" (p. 75) is to be made, plus interest charges on these and other loans.

Yet, we are told, everything else in the Plan depends on righting the balance of payments and paying our debts. So in fact the whole of the Plan rests on "expectations" which take little account of international factors, and assume that present facts and trends can be ruled out by "expecting" them to disappear.

For example, one of the "expectations" is that the terms of trade, which in July 1965 were 3 per cent more favourable than in 1964, will continue at this level—"for the purpose of these calculations this level has been assumed for 1970". The main factor in the "favourable for Britain" level of the terms of trade is their "unfavourable for the underdeveloped countries" level, and these countries can hardly be expected to put up indefinitely with adverse terms of trade, and at the same time increase their imports from Britain. The Plan itself says (p. 80) "the ability of the primary producing countries to increase their imports will depend on their export earnings" (plus exports of capital to them, and their receipts of aid). And incidentally, the Plan provides for restricting Britain's aid programme to them.

But what is the object, after all, of trying to "correct" Britain's balance of payments? It is not to ensure increased production in Britain, still less to provide £6,000 million more for social services and a better standard of living in 1970. The essential purpose—and this is common to the Labour Government and to the loan-providers in the United States and Europe—is *to enable Britain to continue its "commitments" to NATO, etc., in order to play its part in preserving international monopoly capitalism against the advance of socialism and national liberation.*

It is, in short, to continue the policy which has brought Britain to such straits, and to refuse the change in policy which is the only real remedy. All the "expectations" in the world, even if soundly based from a purely economic standpoint, cannot cure this basic disease.

The Class Purpose of the Plan

If the central aim of the Plan, whatever its trimmings, is to enable the Labour Government to continue its policy abroad on behalf of monopoly capitalism, some of the *means* envisaged to secure higher production in Britain are no less in the interests of the monopoly capitalists and against the interests of the working people.

In his Foreword to *Working for Prosperity* Mr. George Brown tells us that "critical" to the fulfilment of the National Plan is the successful application of his Policy for Productivity, Prices and Incomes, and that those who obstruct this policy "are denying us the very things we are fighting for".

It is not necessary to repeat the arguments against this policy, which is opposed by a powerful section of the Labour movement in principle, and by

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virtually all trade unions in practice. The point now is that the Government, in face of this opposition, is not only making the carrying through of this policy the condition for the fulfilment of the Plan, but is threatening legislation to ensure that wage demands have to get over a number of hurdles before they are even put to the employers.

But it is not only a case of escalating the propaganda and pressure against wage increases. There are detailed proposals in the Plan which involve direct attacks on established trade union rights and practices.

There is to be "a wholesale attack on 'overmanning' in industry. . . . It is an essential part of the policy for productivity, prices and incomes to get rid of restrictive practices of all kinds". (p. 11). True, the Plan mentions redundancy compensation, industrial training, and improvements in the Employment Exchange Services, and on this basis calls unemployment "redeployment". But the edge of its treatment of "restrictive practices" is directed against the workers.

As for restrictive practices by the employers, the Plan (Part I, p. 3) observes philosophically:

> "Sometimes Government action may be required to strengthen the forces of competition, for example, by reinforcing the legislation against restrictive practices or providing for more disclosure in company accounts." But "Care will be taken not to destroy the complex mechanisms on which the market economy is based."

As for monopolies:

> "While the Government are intent on getting rid of restrictive practices and preventing the abuse of monopoly power, they would not intend to use their powers to hinder mergers which they were satisfied would promote the greater efficiency and international competitiveness of British industry. Where the Government can assist in the promotion of these desirable developments they are ready to do so and in some instances they may wish to take the initiative in helping to bring them about."

The slogan now is evidently "Bigger and Better Monopolies". Gone are the rude references to "the giant corporations or private financial empires which dominate so much of the British economy" (*Signposts for the Sixties*, adopted by the Labour Party Conference in 1961).

The detailed plans for unemployment ("redeployment") include cuts by 1970 of the numbers employed in coal-mining by 175,000; and in inland transport by 112,000.

Coal output in 1970 is put at 170 to 180 million tons, as against Labour's promised guarantee of 200 million tons; while the consumption of the monopolies' oil is to rise by 32 million tons, regardless of balance of payments needs. It must be remembered that the projected massive reduction in coal-mining employment must inevitably mean the depopulation of many mining areas. And the increase in employment in the oil-refining industry is expected to be only 4,000 by 1970, concentrated in South England.

The net reduction in employment in inland transport by 112,000 is largely based on the railways—

> "The bulk of the labour release is expected from the railways, with smaller releases from road passenger transport, ports and inland waterways. Road haulage contracting and 'miscellaneous transport services' show increasing labour requirements."

Detailed figures show a reduction of 172,000 in Rail Transport (British Railways and London Transport, excluding "hotel and catering, dock and harbour, shipping and workshop activities of British Railways"). This figure assumes that "the question of train manning is settled", and "(a) further substantial progress will be made in implementing closure proposals; (b) that the plans for liner train services will be introduced without further substantial delay; (c) that a start will be made with the process of concentration on selected trunk routes."

The Plan (Part II, p. 206) thus brings out clearly the loss of jobs that these proposals involve. They affect not only railway workers and employers, but also the public generally through the withdrawal of services.

And that the mainly privately-owned transport companies are to gain from this cutting of railway services and employment is brought out in the next section of the Plan, covering Road Haulage Contracting. Here employment is to rise by 25,000 (a footnote says that "C" licence and other "own account" transport are excluded).

The Plan also refers to the uncertainty of Government policy on road/rail co-ordination. What is noticeable in the whole treatment of inland transport is the absence of any other reference to the co-ordinated and integrated transport system promised by Labour.

While the Plan provides for considerable expansion of employment in manufacturing industries (where profits are made), health and education services are not so favoured.

> "In the case of health and education the forecast rate of [rise in employment] is approximately 1 per cent a year slower than in recent years [under the Tories], even though increasing demands on these services will have to be met—particularly in view of the growing proportion of children and old people in the population."

So this is the Labour Government's attitude to the needs of children and old people.

Investment, Public and Private

The effect of the various proposals of the Plan is

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to keep down wages, break down established trade union practices, increase "redeployment", and restrict the growth of the social services, for the benefit of the employers in general and of the monopolies in particular.

This leads on to the use of the expanded profits for investment.

In the public sector, the Plan tells us that investment is subject to Government control, and the estimates "represent programmes rather than forecasts". But it adds that "the programmes are not irrevocable four or five years ahead but are subject to revision in the light of changing circumstances."

As we have seen, even under the Labour Government, the investment programmes of the nationalised industries and of central and local government are the first victims of "changing circumstances". The programmes in the Plan are therefore nothing but forecasts based on the assumption that circumstances will not change.

As for investment in the private sector, "this is largely outside the control of the Government", though "subject to a considerable amount of Government influence through the operation of the tax system and informal consultation". And the Plan's estimates of investment in manufacturing industry

> "do not necessarily represent firms' actual investment plans: in most cases the industrial representatives had some doubts about whether the necessary investment would in fact be forthcoming."

In other words, the investment estimates for the private sector are even less securely based than those for the public sector, especially as the Plan repudiates any idea of Government control. And although there are occasional references to the Ministry of Technology, there is little indication of the promised Technological Revolution.

Throughout the Plan the subject of which class is to get the benefit of the increased production, that is, what changes there will be in profits and wages and salaries, is carefully avoided. It is said that the funds needed for the projected investment will be forthcoming, and in this section there is the very revealing remark: "The assumptions made include a significant allowance for the effect of the Government's prices and incomes policy." This is a clear indication of the basic meaning of this policy—that it is expected to increase profits, which will then be available for expanding investment. On page 161 (Part I) there is a table giving "The Use of Resources", on the basis of the Gross National Product in 1970 being 25 per cent higher than in 1964. In this, the division into wages and salaries and profits and rent, which is a regular feature of the figures for the G.N.P. in the *National Income and Expenditure* Bluebook, is not given.

Investment in Housing (shared between local authorities and private builders) is assumed to rise year by year, with a target of 500,000 new dwellings in 1970 (in 1964, 383,000). The Plan (Part I, p. 172) observes that "there are today some 3 million houses which ought already to have been replaced," and, "while about 70,000 of these are being demolished annually as slums, the number fit only for demolition is being added to every year." In addition, "about 30,000 houses are lost every year to make way for other development", and new households are likely to be formed at an average of about 140,000 a year.

This means that about 240,000 new dwellings a year will be wanted to make up for demolition and new needs, so that even the 500,000 new dwellings projected for 1970 would only make a 260,000 cut in the 3 million "which ought already to have been replaced."

The 500,000 target for 1970 follows a decision by the Government to give Housing "a greater priority than it has had for many years past", and to increase the share of local authorities in the total; there will be a "review of housing subsidies" to help the local authorities.

According to Mr. Crossman's statement at the Labour Party Conference, it seems that the promise of lower interest rates has been abandoned; instead, the Housing Subsidy is to be increased. In other words, the "market economy" in interest rates is to continue, with the Government subsidising the local authorities to enable them to pay the high interest, so that the private lenders can get what they demand. Moreover, nothing is said about the costs of land and building materials.

The Nature of Labour's Plan

"This is a Plan to provide the basis for greater economic growth," and "we must succeed if we are to achieve all our objectives of social justice and welfare, of rising standards of living, of better social capital, and of a full life for all in a pleasant environment." So we are told in the Introduction to the Plan.

But the underlying assumption of the Plan is that the "market economy" will go on, along with the strengthening of monopoly and the promotion of monopoly interests at home and abroad. There is not a single social or class change proposed.

That monopoly capitalism will go on indefinitely is the outlook of the Labour Government. Boasting of all the Government was doing, Mr. Callaghan at the Labour Party Conference praised the corporation tax as "this great revolution", and predicted that it would stay on the Statute Book for half a century. So one of the Government's many "assumptions" is that in a period when the world is in rapid

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transition to socialism, Britain will still be taxing the monopolies in the year A.D. 2015!

Labour's National Plan is built up on the intentions and estimates of "industry"—by which is meant the employers. And the proposals for implementing the plan are cash incentives for the employers, coupled with "informal consultation"; and for the workers, cash restrictions and the big stick, coupled with intensive propaganda of a Good Time in the future.

The Statist (17.9.65) observed that if the task of communication (by which is meant propaganda) is not successfully performed "the Plan must run aground among the shallows of an unplanned private sector or on the reefs of an alienated labour force", adding that "the problems are seen as management sees them".

The fact that the Plan has been produced with the co-operation of the employers is a sign that the serious position of British monopoly capitalism is recognised, and that some attempt is being made to examine the facts; but as the only solutions the monopolists can see is to extend monopoly State control (through the little Neddies) and to take it out of the workers, the Plan as presented is a gigantic piece of propaganda to cover the all-round attack on wages and conditions. The "incomes policy" is its openly stated basis, with the breaking down of trade union conditions won in the long struggles of the past. Hours of work are to remain as they are. Two of the major nationalised industries, coal and rail, are to be ruthlessly cut down for the benefit of privately-owned concerns. The proposed doubling of central expenditure on roads is to provide the "infrastructure" for this. The renationalisation of steel is not mentioned. The Defence cuts are insignificant; the total annual cost of £2,000 million (at 1964 prices, therefore certain to rise) is to go on indefinitely. The export of private capital is to go on, to the tune of some £250 million a year. There is no question of any change of policy; a rapid increase of exports is assumed, but there is no reference to expansion of trade with the socialist countries.

Whether or not this "Plan" of economic growth will be successful is anyone's guess, just as the detailed figures are guesses of Mr. George Brown, his Councils and employers. But this is not the main point. The main point is: for whose benefit? So long as monopolies dominate British industry, the "full life in a pleasant environment" will only be for the rich. "Social justice" is just a joke in capitalist society; "rising standards of living" will not be given to the workers automatically by employers or government, but will only come about through class struggle, in the first instance against the incomes policy.

The contrast between capitalist growth and socialist growth shows what is possible also in Britain, and the Plan gives some idea of the immense resources in this country, on which socialist growth could be based. But while the problems of growth to meet *the people's growing material and cultural needs* can only be solved in a Socialist Britain, the advance towards this needs unity of the labour movement and the people in struggle against the monopolies, not "partnership" of right-wing Labour leaders with the monopolies against the working people. The way forward is not to be found in Labour's National Plan, but in the draft Congress resolutions of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

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Some Questions About Laws of Dialectics

Maurice Cornforth

THE purpose of this article is to ask, and try to suggest the way to answer, some questions about the laws of dialectics, as they are formulated in Marxist philosophy. What sort of laws are they? How do we discover them? How do we know them? What reasons have we for proclaiming them as absolutely universal laws, governing both human thought and the objective world?

My first question about laws of dialectics is—What sort of laws are they? This question should be asked because what we call "laws" are not all of the same sort. And one can hardly get clear on how one discovers and knows a set of laws, or on the reasons for them or the point of them, unless one is clear first of all on what sort of laws one is talking about.

Man-made Laws and Objective Laws

It is quite obvious that not all laws are of the same sort, for, in the first place, when we speak of "the laws" administered by judges in law courts we are obviously not speaking of the same sort of laws as when we speak of "the laws of nature". A motorist in his travels, for example, is governed by the law of stopping at red lights and also by Newton's laws of motion. One of the earliest of all philosophical muddles depended on confounding together these two sorts of laws[1]—for it was supposed that God legislates for nature in the same way as the Minister of Transport lays down regulations for motorists.

What is in common between laws of every sort is that every law is expressible in a special kind of generalisation. The difference between this special kind of generalisation and others is easily illustrated. If you say "All comrades at this meeting have paid-up Party cards", that is an ordinary general statement which simply says that those individuals who happen to be attending the meeting have paid-up cards. But if you say "No-one is allowed in the meeting without a paid-up card", that is a special kind of generalisation which applies, not merely to certain individuals, but to every conceivable member of the human race. It therefore expresses "a law", namely, a law governing admission to the meeting. But the fact that laws are always expressed in such generalisations should not be let obscure the fact that what are thus expressed are quite different sorts of law. It is quite obvious that the law which requires all motorists to stop at red lights, and the law which requires all bodies to attract one another with a force proportional to the square of their distance, are laws of different sorts—though both are expressed in the same form of generalisation.

What we may term "legislative" laws are distinguished from "laws of nature", for one thing, by the very obvious fact that they are promulgated by people for the instruction of people. There is no sense in promulgating legislation except to be obeyed by people—as King Canute demonstrated when he bade the tide recede. Legislative laws can therefore be altered at will by people. Laws of nature, on the other hand, are not promulgated, and people cannot alter them. Further, people can not only alter legislative laws but disobey them or cause them to be infringed. But they cannot disobey or bring about any infringement of laws of nature, any more than they can alter them. For example, a motorist can disobey the law by driving past the red light; but when another car collides with him, he cannot escape injury by causing the laws of nature to be suspended.

The characteristic of laws of nature of not being promulgated, not being alterable, and not being infringeable, corresponds to what is called their "objectivity".

The objectivity of laws of nature implies another important difference between them and legislative laws. One can say of legislation that it is "just" or "unjust", "well-drafted" or "badly-drafted", and so on—but not that it is true or false. For whatever is formulated as law by the competent legislative authority *is* the law—until such time as it is cancelled or reformulated. On the other hand, a law of

[1] Very strictly speaking, one should not speak of "different sorts of law" but rather of "different senses (or uses) of the word 'law'." For when we distinguish "a law passed by parliament" from "a law of nature" we are not so much distinguishing two sorts of law, similar to distinguishing, say, oaks and beeches as two sorts of tree; rather, we are distinguishing two different uses of the word "law". I do not think such subtle linguistic distinctions really matter much in the present context, so I have chosen to use the simpler phrase "different sorts of law".

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nature is intended to express regularities or patterns which actually occur, objectively, in nature; and so the formulation of the law corresponds or fails to correspond, in varying degree, to what actually takes place. Thus when parliament passes a law there is no sense in saying "This law is only an approximation" (though, of course, one can say "It is only a compromise", or "It doesn't properly express the will of the people", or "It doesn't meet the needs of the situation"). The formulation of a law of nature, on the other hand, can be, and usually is, regarded as no more than an approximation. Hence while we cannot alter the laws of nature, we can and do alter our formulations of them—trying to do so in such a way as to make the laws as formulated correspond more and more truly to what actually takes place in nature.

Incidentally, this point about the objectivity of laws of nature illustrates the way in which confusion of different sorts of law leads to idealism. Thus a motorist stops at traffic lights because of and in obedience to the traffic regulations. But the apple did not similarly fall on Newton's head because of and in obedience to the law of gravity. The traffic regulations are laws conceived and promulgated (by men) for the purpose of regulating traffic. The laws of nature are not similarly laws conceived and promulgated (by God) for the purpose of regulating nature.

So far I have distinguished legislative laws from laws of nature, as laws of different sorts. It may be noted (in passing) that laws of nature themselves are not all of the same sort. Nor do these sorts of objective laws include only what are commonly called "laws of nature", but also "sociological laws". If we look at the formulations of laws (both of nature and society, which approximate to how processes of nature and of society actually proceed) we can easily see how many different sorts of laws are included.

Thus there are laws which say (or approximate to saying) how particular things always behave in particular circumstances, and other laws which only say what results, or usually results, from the interactions of large numbers of individuals. Many of the laws of physics are of the latter sort, and so are the laws concerning the development of social relations which are formulated by social science. Again, there are laws which state no more than "tendencies". For example, Marx's "Law of the falling rate of profit" does not say that when the organic composition of capital increases the rate of profit always falls, but that it always *would* fall *unless* something were done to counteract the tendency. Thus the operation of this law does not result in the rate of profit actually falling, but in capitalists engaging in policies to prevent it falling. Again, there are laws of "development", among which may be distinguished what may be called "fundamental" laws of development, which state the kinds of adjustment on which the entire course of a process in the long term depends (such as the law formulated by Marx, that social development is governed by the adjustment of relations of production to forces of production), and laws which state the sequence of stages through which particular processes pass, or tend to pass (such as the law by which capitalism passes from a stage of free competition to monopoly).

It is also quite interesting to note (again in passing) that what are called "moral laws" are distinguishable both from legislation, on the one hand, and laws of nature on the other. They are like legislation in that they apply for the regulation of human conduct, and that people can disobey them if they wish. At the same time they appear to have an objective character, unlike legislation, in as much as they are not promulgated in the way legislation is, are not alterable at will, and we can always argue about whether a particular formulation of moral law is or is not a true formulation of what people ought to do.

Laws of Logic and Mathematics

Having distinguished objective laws of nature from legislative laws, it is now necessary to distinguish from both the sorts of laws that are formulated in formal logic and mathematics. The latter are, indeed, so different that the difference is often recognised by calling them, not "laws", but "principles", "theorems", or "formulas". However, they often *are* called "laws", as in such phrases as "the laws of thought", "the laws of logic", "the law of non-contradiction", and so on.

When it comes to laws of logic and mathematics, the first difference to note from the other laws is that it is not possible even to *imagine* anything happening which did not accord with them. In the case of legislative laws, on the other hand, we can not only imagine such events, but actually bring them about. We cannot, it is true, cause anything to happen contrary to the laws of nature. But we can still imagine states of affairs in which their infringement took place. For example, we cannot cause the law of gravity to be suspended, but we can imagine its suspension, as is done in fairy tales or in certain works of science fiction. But we cannot make up even fairy tales about a world where the laws of logic did not apply, or where two plus two was not equal to four.

This difference implies an important distinction between two sorts of "necessity", corresponding to different sorts of law. In general, we speak of "necessity" with reference to whatever cannot be altered. There is, then, an obvious distinction between what cannot *in fact* be altered and what we

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cannot even *imagine* as being altered. Thus, for example, bodies necessarily exert gravitational attraction; and two sets of two bodies are necessarily equal in number to one set of four. The first example illustrates what may be called "natural" or "factual" or "material" necessity, and the second "logical", "mathematical" or "formal" necessity.

Evidently, laws of logic and mathematics are unlike both legislative laws and laws of nature in their logical, mathematical or formal necessity. But in another way they are like legislative laws and unlike laws of nature. They are like legislative laws in that (even though their failure to apply is unimaginable) we can disobey or violate them. Thus just as a motorist can disobey the law by driving past the red light, so a person engaging in argument can violate the laws of logic, or a person adding up figures can violate the laws of arithmetic.

This comparison of laws of logic and mathematics with legislative laws, on the one hand, and laws of nature, on the other, makes it pretty obvious, I think, that laws of logic and mathematics express rules for argument and calculation—necessary unalterable rules, unlike legislative laws, which are alterable. When we disobey them we make mistakes, of the sort which result in inconsistency or in reaching the wrong conclusions.

They are not, like the laws of nature, laws about what actually takes place (objectively, in the material world, independently of our thought), but laws to regulate our arguments and calculations about what takes place.

Thus the law of gravity is about what actually takes place, in the sense that it informs us about what happenings to expect—for example, that the apple will fall on Newton's head and not fly up into the sky. We can imagine its flying up into the sky, but we know it won't. Arithmetic, on the other hand, enables us to calculate that if, say, we put two apples in a box, and then another two, we have put a total of four in the box. This does not similarly inform us of what to expect. It might be suggested that it informs us that when we look into the box we will find four apples—but it is easy to see that it does nothing of the kind. We might well find only three apples in the box, or five, because someone had taken one out or put another in when we weren't looking. That would not contradict the laws of arithmetic; for *whatever* happens, those laws *necessarily* hold for calculations about it.

At the same time, laws of logic and mathematics are like laws of nature and unlike legislative laws, and so may be called objective, in as much as they have to be *discovered* by us—just as objective laws have to be discovered—and may be correctly or incorrectly formulated. Thus no congress of logicians or mathematicians can promulgate laws of logic and mathematics, as a parliament can promulgate laws. The job of logicians and mathematicians is to discover the laws, and to formulate them correctly. Their necessarily holding as rules for argument and calculation is quite independent of any human decision.

In that sense, logic and mathematics, when correctly worked out, may be said to be *true*—just as any other sciences may be said to be true. Their truth has the characteristic of "necessary truth" as distinct from "factual truth".

The Discovery of Objective Laws

At this point I am going to leave legislative laws aside (they have served their turn in my argument), and proceed to discuss how we discover, get to know and find how correctly to formulate other (objective) sorts of laws—first of all, laws of nature, and laws of logic and mathematics, and then laws of dialectics.

All objective laws, whether they apply to nature, or society, or as rules for argument and calculation, have to be *discovered.* And the only way of discovering anything is to draw it out of experience and practice, and find some way of testing it.

This point about discovery applies just as much to laws of logic and mathematics as to the laws formulated by the natural and social sciences (the so-called "empirical" sciences). I want to dwell on it for a moment, because certain philosophers have created such vast muddles on this very topic. These philosophers (the most famous one was the idealist, Immanuel Kant) said that logic and mathematics are "known *a priori*" (which, roughly translated, means "independent of all experience"). And so they drew a hard and fast distinction, or an absolute antithesis, between what is "known *a priori*" and what, on the other hand, is "known *a posteriori*", or "empirically", or, in plain English, only as a result of experience. Hence they supposed that the truths of logic and mathematics are somehow spun out of our heads, by a process of pure thought, independent of all experience. They might admit that experience is necessary in order in the first place to stimulate the performance of this miracle, but they denied that the concepts of logic and mathematics have to be drawn from experience, just like other concepts.

This antithesis between "*a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge" is, I maintain, a false antithesis, a mere invention of idealist philosophers. We arrive at the truths of logic and mathematics by abstracting and generalising them from experience, just as we arrive at all truths.

This point was made rather forcibly by Engels, in his discussion about mathematics in Chapter 3 of *Anti-Duhring*[2]. The mathematical concepts of

[2] Some of this discussion—for instance, what he says about "imaginary numbers" and about "the axioms" of mathematics—is now terribly out of date. But the fundamental points, from which I quote, are not out of date.

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number and geometrical form, he wrote, "have not been derived from any source other than the world of reality". Numbers come from counting, and counting "requires objects that can be counted", including "the ten fingers on which men learn to count". The concept of geometrical form, he continued, "is derived exclusively from the external world, and does not arise in the mind as a product of pure thought. There must be things which have shape and whose shapes are compared before anyone can arrive at the idea of form. . . . Before it was possible to arrive at the idea of deducing the form of a cylinder from the rotation of a rectangle about one of its sides, a number of real rectangles and cylinders, in however imperfect a form, must have been examined. Like all sciences, mathematics arose out of the *needs* of men; from the measurement of land and of the content of vessels, from the computation of time and mechanics."

The important distinction between laws of logic and mathematics, on the one hand, and laws discovered by natural and social sciences, on the other —or between *necessary* and *factual or empirical* truths—does not, then, consist in the former being somehow spun out of the mind independent of experience, whereas the latter are derived from experience.

It consists first of all in the distinction, already noted, between laws expressing necessary rules of argument and calculation, and laws expressing regularities observable in what takes place, the object of argument and calculation.

And it consists, secondly and consequentially, in the methods required for *testing* or *certifying* the truth of the proposed laws.

When we have made an extrapolation from experience, or formulated a law, which it is proposed to use for practical purposes (as is the case with laws of logic and mathematics, as well as the natural and social sciences, the formulation of all of which arises, as Engels said, out of the experience and practical needs of men), we require some method of *testing* it, so as to make sure it is formulated correctly or, at all events, as correctly as at a given stage of the evolution of science and technology we can manage.

The Test of Objective Laws

As I have already remarked, the laws of nature (and of society, since objective laws are exemplified in social as in natural processes) tell us what to expect. Or rather, to be quite explicit, they tell us what to expect under given circumstances.

For example, the law of gravity tells us that *if* the apple becomes detached from the tree we may expect it to fall. As I also remarked, it is always imaginable that the laws of nature should be other than we actually find them to be. For clearly, there is no sense in saying one expects something to happen unless one can imagine something else happening. For example, to expect the apple to fall is to expect it not to rise: one imagines the two possibilities, to fall or to rise, and (instructed from the experience of Sir Isaac Newton) expects the former.

That being so, the way to test the truth of laws of nature (and of society) is, evidently, to keep on verifying whether what they lead us to expect actually happens or not. If it does not, then evidently our formulation of the law requires reformulation. But even if it does, that is no *final* proof of the law's validity. Such laws never are and never can be finally certified. Even those of which we feel (from long and varied experience) most sure have still a certain provisional or conjectural character: we may always need to amend them in the light of some new experience, or some new discovery.

Such laws are called "empirical" (from the Greek word for "experience") not simply because they are derived from experience (for if that were all, then laws of logic and mathematics would also be "empirical"), but because they tell us *what to expect* and so are to be *tested in experience*. The empirical sciences, that is, the natural and social sciences as distinct from logic and mathematics, engage in investigations a part of the outcome of which is to formulate empirical laws. And these sciences have to devise methods of testing those laws—the exact methods varying, of course, according to the nature of the subject-matter under investigation.

It follows that the conclusions of empirical sciences must always have the logical character of being *falsifiable*. For scientific theories about nature or society must be capable of being tested in experience. A theory so devised as always to be confirmed, whatever happens, is no scientific theory—for it would not be susceptible to any empirical test. For example, the theory that God created and governs the world is no scientific theory—for there is no way of testing it. Whatever happens, the supporters of this theory can always say that their theory is confirmed—they can always say that "God moves in a mysterious way" and everything happens as he intended. The theory is so devised as not to be falsifiable. It is a mere fantasy, incapable of test.

In contrast to laws of nature, laws of logic and mathematics are not empirical. We derive them from experience, but we do not test them in experience like empirical laws. For their function is not to tell us what to expect, but how to argue and calculate about it. Laws or rules of argument and calculation are not to be tested by whether what particular arguments or calculations lead us to expect actually happens—for if it does not happen, that does not show that the rules are wrong but rather that the argument or calculation proceeded from wrong premises. As I have said, whatever happens, the

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rules of logic and mathematics are the necessary rules for arguing and calculating about it.

The test of logic and mathematics, and so the guiding principle for working out theorems or laws of logic and mathematics, lies in the processes of logical and mathematical *proof* or *demonstration*. The correctness or otherwise (necessary truth or falsity) of a proposed theorem is established or disestablished by the methods of proof.

Now the techniques of proof in logic and mathematics are (like the techniques of verification in the empirical sciences) very highly specialised, and are still the subject of some dispute amongst those specially concerned with them. I could not go into such technicalities here, even if I were better qualified than I am to do so. I would like only to mention, in passing, one rather interesting point.

A properly performed mathematical proof finally establishes, as necessarily true, the corresponding theorem of mathematics, whereas no amount of empirical verification can ever finally establish the truth of an empirical law. It used to be believed that every conceivable theorem of mathematics could, with sufficient ingenuity, be proved. In the 'thirties, however, the mathematician Kurt Gödel proved that not all theorems of arithmetic could be proved from any finite set of arithmetical axioms.[3] Gödel's proof shows that just as a complete and final system of empirical science, with everything in it established for all time, is a fantasy, so is a complete and final system of mathematics.

Laws of Dialectics

I now come to laws of dialectics, and propose to arrive at some conclusions about them by discussing in what ways they are like and unlike other sorts of laws.

Laws of dialectics are obviously unlike laws of logic and mathematics, in that the latter do not claim to tell us anything about "the nature of the world" but simply formulate rules for argument and calculation. Laws of dialectics, on the other hand, do claim to tell us something about the world, namely, that things change, are interconnected, develop through contradictions, and so on. Hence laws of dialectics have to be formulated meaningfully in words, and cannot be presented in any formalised symbolism such as is used in logic and mathematics; and they are not susceptible to anything like logical and mathematical proof, done by operations with symbols in a formal calculus.

[3] A stock example of an "unprovable theorem" is the theorem that every even number is the sum of two primes. This is true of every even number ever investigated, but all efforts to prove its necessary truth have failed. Those interested will find a very readable non-technical account in a short book, *Gödel's Proof*, by Ernest Nagel and James R. Newman—Routledge, 1959.

In this unlikeness to laws of logic and mathematics they are like laws of nature. But they differ fundamentally from laws of nature, in that the whole point of formulating the latter is to tell us what to expect in concrete circumstances, whereas the formulation of laws of dialectics helps supply us with no such concrete information.

This difference becomes very plain in examples. The science of chemistry, for example, formulates laws which tell us what chemical changes to expect from the addition or subtraction of atoms in molecules. But the law of dialectics, that quantitative changes result in qualitative changes, does not tell us what to expect to happen either in the circumstances of particular chemical changes or in any other concrete circumstances. The working of this law of dialectics is, it is true, *illustrated* in the empirical laws formulated by chemistry and other empirical sciences, so that the laws of nature, as formulated in the sciences, accord with the laws of dialectics, or are "dialectical". But to secure any information at all about what to expect in concrete circumstances we must always investigate those circumstances and formulate the corresponding empirical laws, or laws of nature. The bare statement of laws of dialectics does not, by itself, help in the least.

Similarly, the laws of physics tell us how various forces of attraction and repulsion operate in nature, and so enable us to engage in calculations of what physical effects to expect. But "the law of the unity of opposites" (of which "opposites" the forces of attraction and repulsion are instances) tells us absolutely nothing about physical or any other effects.

The same point was stressed by Engels in his discussion about "negation of negation" in Chapter 13 of *Anti-Duhring*. He there pointed out that merely to say that various processes come under "the negation of negation" says absolutely nothing about how these processes concretely proceed. To inform ourselves of what to expect when these processes are in operation we must investigate them, and discover the corresponding laws for the particular processes.

Similarly, in his essay *On Contradiction*, Mao Tse-tung pointed out that just to say that there are always "contradictions" tells us absolutely nothing about the particular contradictions in particular processes. To know about "the contradictions of capitalism", for example, and how they work out, we must investigate capitalism and its laws (as Marx did in *Capital*). In this we should be guided, like Marx, by the laws of dialectical thought. But simply to say "there are always contradictions" does not enable us to reach any conclusion at all about the contradictions of capitalism, or of anything else.

In this way, laws of dialectics are quite unlike

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laws of nature, and much more like laws of logic and mathematics. They are like the latter in that they provide instructions or rules about how to think properly. To think properly we must follow the rules of logical consistency (formal logic); and when counting or measuring we must follow the rules of mathematics. Similarly, we must follow the precepts of dialectics in taking into account changes, interconnections, transitions from quantitative to qualitative change, and so on. Thus Engels (in the Introduction to *Anti-Duhring*) coupled "dialectics" with "formal logic" under the heading of "the science of thought and its laws".

At the same time, they are, as already noted, like laws of nature in that they do tell us something about how things actually are. Thus the laws of physics, for example, tell us that various gravitational and other forces operate in the world; and the laws of dialectics also tell us something, though something much more generalised—that qualitative changes are based on quantitative changes, that there is always a unity of opposites, and so on.

Taking these likenesses and unlikenesses into account, we may conclude that laws of dialectics differ from laws of nature in being much more *general*, or *universal*. They are, indeed, *absolutely* universal. Thus laws of nature are the laws of particular processes and of particular kinds of things. The law of gravity, for example, applies to bodies having measurable mass. The laws of chemistry apply to chemical processes. Again, the laws of development of society apply to the relations of human individuals in society—but not, say, to ants. The laws of dialectics, on the other hand, apply (or are supposed to apply) to absolutely anything and everything. Thus Engels, in *Dialectics of Nature*, called them "the most general laws", and in *Anti-Duhring* (Chapter 13) wrote that "dialectics is the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought".

If, then, laws of dialectics are absolutely universal and apply to everything, all thought about anything must always take them into account as guiding principles—which accounts for their being classifiable with laws of logic and mathematics as "laws of thought", even though they are a very different sort of law.

As "laws of thought", the laws of dialectics do not in any sense supplant the laws of logic, but supplement them. Thought must always satisfy the rules of formal consistency, as formulated in formal logic. But consistent thinking about a changing world must be dialectical.

At the same time, such absolutely universal laws do not tell us anything concrete about any particular processes—which accounts for the big difference between laws of dialectics and laws of nature.

The Discovery and Test of Laws of Dialectics

Laws of absolute universality are a different sort of law from laws of nature. Their scope is different, the way they serve us is different—and so is the way they are discovered and tested.

I have maintained that the formulation of *all* laws is derived from experience and practical need. Thus just as the laws of chemistry are derived from the experience of dealing with chemical processes, and the laws of mechanics from the experience of making and using machines, so, it may be said, the universal laws of dialectics are derived from the *whole* of experience. Our whole experience bears out such laws as that "things move, change and are interconnected," that "qualitative changes are based on quantitative changes", that "there is a unity of opposites", and so on.

There is, however, a big difference between the way in which experience bears out, say, the laws of chemical change, and bears out, say, the dialectical law of the dependence of qualitative on quantitative change. The laws of chemistry say that particular qualitative changes depend on particular quantitative ones. They are arrived at by the systematic investigation of particular processes. They tell us what to expect in particular circumstances, and are falsified if the expectation is falsified. The dialectical law, on the other hand, simply asserts a universal connection of quality with quantity. Particular expectations of such connection in particular cases might, then, be falsified, but the dialectical law would still not be falsified. For it lays down nothing definite about any particular cases.

And so, again, such a dialectical law is not tested and established like laws of nature, in particular detailed empirical investigations. In Marx's *Capital*, and other works, will be found the record of the investigations he engaged in to try to discover the law of motion of capitalist society. But in no works by him or by anyone else will be found the record of similar detailed empirical investigations aimed at the discovery of the laws of dialectics. For such laws, unlike laws of nature, are not discovered and are not tested by any such investigations.

That laws of dialectics are not to be established or disestablished by detailed empirical investigations raises the question of *what* test can then be proposed for deciding their validity or invalidity.

Different sorts of laws are subject to different sorts of test. Thus, as we have seen, laws of nature (and the similar sorts of laws governing the development of social relations) are subject to detailed empirical tests. Laws of logic and mathematics are subject to the sort of test provided in the operations of logical and mathematical demonstration. Since laws of dialectics are a different sort of laws from either "empirical" laws or laws of logic and mathematics, the test of dialectics is different from either,

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According to dialectics, things are always interconnected and are always in change and motion (coming into being and ceasing to be in patterns of complex inter-relationship), so that to ignore their interconnection and motion (as the so-called "metaphysical" mode of thought does[4], always leads to mistakes and inconsistencies.

This generalisation, or general law about everything, is confirmed by the whole of experience, by every phenomenon that has ever been investigated, and by every train of thought that has ever been published. Experience does confirm that that is how things are, and that that is how we should think of them. But we may submit this universal generalisation to another test than the test of continually examining things and finding whether or not it applies to them. This is the test suggested by asking the question: "How could it *not* apply?"

Suppose, for example, that there were a thing not connected with other things, how could we investigate it, or have any experience of any kind connected with it? Obviously we could not do so—such a thing is a mere fantasy-thing. Similarly with things completely changeless, or outside the processes of coming into being and ceasing to be.

Hence the test which establishes the absolute universality, and objectivity, of such a generalised principle or law of dialectics, or of dialectical thought, is a test of its *necessity*. Its absolute universality is a function of its necessity—as a "law of thought" *and* as a law objectively realised in nature and human society.

The same sort of test should be applied to such dialectical laws as those of "the unity of opposites" and "quantity and quality". Thus, for example, to generalise about the motions of bodies requires statements about the forces of attraction and repulsion acting between them. *Could* there be attraction without repulsion, or vice versa? Evidently not. Similarly with other instances of "opposites". The "law of the unity of opposites" is universally and necessarily exemplified in all the processes of the real world.

Again, we should ask ourselves such questions as: How should we recognise and measure any quantitative changes in processes in space and time unless there were recognisable qualities connected with them? And how could we formulate laws governing such changes except in terms of such connection? The same sorts of questions need to be asked (and answered) about the so-called "negation of negation" in developmental processes. What sort of process would it be, in which the appearance of a new phase did not mark "the negation" of the old, and in which the possibility of the reappearance of "negated" characteristics was not contained in the "negation" of the new features which had "negated" them?[5]

In general, the laws of dialectics, if adequately formulated, are always, and necessarily, exemplified by all the particularised laws which are found to apply as generalisations about particular processes. And so, arguing against those who dismissed laws of dialectics as being mere products of word-spinning, devoid of applicability to the real world, Engels could write, in the Preface to *Anti-Duhring*, that "there could be no question of building the laws of dialectics into nature, but of discovering them in it and evolving them from it"; and that the development of empirical sciences "is of such a kind that it must bring the dialectical character of natural events more and more to the consciousness of those empiricists who are most opposed to it".

The laws of dialectics are, indeed, "discovered in nature". They are not inventions of the mind. They are not *a priori* principles which the mind somehow imposes on or "builds into" nature. The genuineness of the discovery of laws of dialectics, as laws valid for the objective world, reflecting the most general features of the actual interconnection and motion of real things, is vouched for by their being discovered in nature, by their being generalisations from the whole of experience, by their exemplification in all the discoveries of the sciences; and the necessity of their holding universally is vouched for by the demonstration that no account of real processes which contradicted them could ever possibly be anything but fiction and fantasy.

The "Science of Interconnections"

At the head of the chapter on Dialectics in *Dialectics of Nature* (Chapter 2), Engels posed a general problem: to develop the study of dialectics as "the science of interconnections". And on the next page he posed a consequential problem: to trace "the inner interconnection of these laws with one another".

He posed these problems as problems to be worked on, not as problems that had been completely solved. He never suggested that no more work was needed and all we need now do is learn various formulas printed in the textbooks. To believe that Engel's

[4] For a description of this, as opposed to "dialectics", see Engels, the Introduction to *Anti-Duhring*. It is important to note that, as Engels presented it, dialectics is opposed to "metaphysics", not to "formal logic".

[5] Difficulties and confusions in the discussion of this dialectical law seem often to arise from the fact that in its traditional formulation the word "negation" is used in a different sense from that in which the same word is used in formal logic—and this different sense is not accurately defined. Similar confusions arise in discussing "contradictions" due to the word "contradiction" being used in a different sense in the phrase "dialectical contradiction" than it is in the phrase "logical contradiction".

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own writings constitute such textbooks would be especially mistaken, since he explicitly said that they do not. We should therefore give him the credit of being neither a magician nor a prophet, but only a scientific thinker opening up new and important fields of inquiry.

The study of dialectics is the study of "interconnections"—not the particular interconnections of particular things or types of things with one another, which the empirical sciences study, but the universal and necessary forms of interconnection in the objective world, the reflection of which in our thought is "a law of thought" for all thinking which corresponds to objective reality and so can inform practice.

The study of dialectics is thus concerned, not with tracing out the laws of concrete events, which is the business of empirical sciences, but rather with the most general categories[6] with which all scientific thinking must operate—the categories of motion, connection, quantity, quality, polar opposition, and so on.

The study of dialectics does not, therefore, inform us about anything that actually happens, but it presents us with the principles for assembling information, so that what actually happens may be faithfully reflected in our thought, in the way required to inform our practice.

In other words, it presents us, as Lenin once said, with the principles for undertaking "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions".

In that lies, I think, the very great practical importance of the systematic study of dialectics and its laws. It needs to be developed, as Engels said, as "the science of interconnections". And this requires a good deal more than merely quoting a few separate formulas of dialectical laws, distinguishing them from other laws, verifying their exemplifications and suggesting reasons for considering them universal and necessary.

In my opinion, most of the work remains to be done.

[6] I have tried to show how laws of dialectics are "category principles", distinguished from both empirical laws and principles of formal logic and mathematics, in *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*, Part III, Chapter 2 (Lawrence and Wishart, 1965). In that book I also tried to explain this use of the word "category".

Elizabethan Popular Songs and the English Musical Tradition

Katharine Thomson

THE purpose of this article is to show how social and economic changes during the transition from feudal to capitalist society are reflected in Elizabethan popular songs. It is important to make a distinction between folk songs and popular songs. We may use the definition of folk music given by the International Folk Music Council[1]: "Folk music is the product of a musical tradition which has been evolved through the process of oral transmission." Popular music, on the other hand, is transmitted partly through the medium of writing, and it therefore ceases to be subject to the subtle process of variation, and of refashioning, and recreating by the community, which is the essence of folk music.

Medieval folk songs were the product of the peasantry in feudal society. With the break-up of feudalism, many peasants became artisans in the towns. The invention of cheap printing, and the growth of literacy among artisans and tradesmen, led to the production of printed ballads, sold for profit, in which the words were printed separately from the tunes. The production and sale of these broadside ballads developed into a thriving industry during the second half of the 16th century. They were usually sung to tunes derived from the songs of the

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peasantry, which had undergone certain changes through the different conditions of life in the towns. The tunes were often adapted for dancing, and later they formed the basis for many instrumental compositions. These are the tunes which may be described as "Elizabethan popular tunes", although many of them belong originally to an earlier period.

The most important musical changes which crystallised at this time were, first, the replacement of the modes by diatonic major and minor scales, and secondly the establishment of rhythmically defined, rounded melodies, replacing free flexible rhythms associated with speech.

At the same time, in church music modal melodies and unmeasured rhythms of Gregorian plainsong were replaced by diatonic major and minor melodies and measured rhythms, such as those of the metrical psalms and hymns of the Reformed Church.

The period during which these changes took place extended over several centuries, corresponding with the rise of bourgeois society. The establishment of major and minor diatonic scales, and of rhythmically defined, rounded melodies may be associated with the emergence of the English language, the Reformed Church, and the awareness of nationhood, as expressions of the rising bourgeois class.

It is of considerable interest to study the musical changes which took place during this important period of English history. It is also important to try to trace the continuity of melodic tradition in English music, and to examine the relevance of Elizabethan popular songs at the present time.

The Traditional Ballad. Connection between Speech and Song

The origin of the traditional ballad is still obscure, and it is far too complex to be dealt with here. It seems certain, however, that at some stage it was associated with the dance, and that the ballad with refrain was connected with the carol.

The ballad without a refrain may have originated in the chanted tale. Evelyn Wells has shown that the character of several ballad tunes recovered from oral tradition often points to a beginning in chanted speech.[2]

The relationship of speech to folk song is a very important subject, which is now being examined scientifically by Professor A. Sychra and Dr. K. Sedlacek in Prague.[3] They are studying the theories of Janacek on the relationship of Moravian dialect to Moravian folk song, with a view to establishing scientifically whether there is a correlation between emotional expression in speech and music. The results so far obtained bear out Janacek's theories, which are supported by the work of Bartok and Kodaly in Hungary.

Bartok finds in Hungarian folk music three strata, of which the oldest, which he designates as "tempo giusto" (strict rhythm), is very primitive. This type of song is limited in range, sometimes consisting of only two notes. It is probably derived from labour chants or work songs. The second stratum, of later date, is designated as "parlando rubato" (free, speech-like rhythm). These songs are closely related to speech, with flexible rhythms, and a melodic line following the natural inflexion of Hungarian speech. The third stratum is "tempo giusto" again, with strongly-marked rhythmic accents. These tunes, more complex than the earlier "tempo giusto" melodies, are often associated with dancing. They are of later date than the "parlando rubato" style tunes.

When we turn to English folk songs, it is extremely difficult to assign dates, since we have no continuous oral tradition, or systematic collection of songs. If we accept the theory, put forward by George Thomson[1] and others, that music and poetry originated in the rhythmic movement of collective labour, it is certain that songs of the earliest "tempo giusto" type must have existed in England.

Ancient work songs, such as waulking songs, consisting of a simple rhythmical formula, limited in range, usually pentatonic (five-note scale), are still sung in the Hebrides.

For the purpose of this article, however, it is necessary to concentrate on the "parlando rubato" and later "tempo giusto" type of tunes, often adapted from the former for dancing.

In 1934 Vaughan Williams suggested that the origin of folk song was to be found in speech "charged with emotion".[5] He related his own experience of hearing a wayside preacher whose voice rose and fell, under emotional stress, in a melodic pattern resembling the opening phrase of the English folk song, *Bushes and Briars*, which is found in many other English and Scottish songs, such as *Searching for Lambs*.

Vaughan Williams' preacher was speaking in Gaelic, and it is beyond the scope of this article to attempt an analysis of similarities or differences between English and Gaelic speech inflexions. It is relevant, however, to point out that the melodic line of this phrase is close to the natural inflexion of English speech in an ordinary statement. This may be tried by experiment; it is also confirmed by the work of Ward and Armstrong on English speech intonation.[6]

It may be suggested, therefore, that this melodic phrase, based on speech, lies at the heart of English folk songs. We shall give examples of this important tune family later; before this it is necessary to give a short account of popular music in England during the Middle Ages.

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Changes in Popular Music between the 12th and the 16th Century

Ernst Meyer, in his invaluable book on English Chamber Music,[7] has pointed out that the changes in popular music in the Middle Ages were connected with the change from Anglo-Saxon alliterative and declamatory verse to Middle English measured structures with rhyme and accent. The chief characteristics of the new popular music at this time were the use of the major tonality, or Ionian mode, and rhythmic precision.

Popular music contrasted strongly with the music of the Church, based on plainsong melodies, which were modal, and lacked measured rhythm. The effect of the complex choral polyphony, in Latin, was to provide an atmosphere of other-worldliness and spirituality. The Catholic Church was one of the pillars of the feudal order; the purpose of its music was to instil a belief in the immutability of that order. The struggle against the supremacy of the Catholic Church was part of the struggle against feudalism; the English Reformation of 1536-1540 was an assertion of national independence against the supremacy of the Pope.

> "National characteristics in the cultural life of a country are, and always have been, chiefly determined by the characteristics of its *popular* art, and it has invariably been the transition from feudal to modern society which brought these characteristics to the surface."[8]

The new forms of popular music during the later Middle Ages may be associated with the rise of the middle classes, the establishment of the reformed English language, the Reformed Church, and the emergence of the English nation.

The most important features of these new forms were, first the use of the major tonality, or Ionian mode, condemned by the Church as "tonus lascivus", and secondly, the greater rhythmical definition and clarity which "enabled composers of instrumental music to provide a cheerful background for the new burgher classes". It may also be noted that popular music was frequently in duple time, whereas the Church preferred triple time, as symbolic of the Trinity.

It is precisely these features which we find crystallised in the typical Elizabethan popular tunes.

The Change from Traditional to Broadside Ballad in the 16th Century

National consciousness reached its peak in the reign of Elizabeth with the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The national unity was reflected in the closing of the gap which had previously existed between the art of feudal society, mainly represented by church music, and that of the popular minstrelsy.

The class structure of Elizabethan society was much less rigid than that of feudal times. Many members of the aristocracy had sold their land to merchants and traders, who were eager to acquire the status of "gentleman". Marriages were often arranged for that purpose. During the early part of Elizabeth's reign, opportunities seemed open to every citizen; a diligent apprentice could become a master-craftsman, and so ascend the social ladder. On the other hand, economic pressure forced many members of the middle stratum down into the lowest class of labourers and dispossessed persons.

The enclosures which started with the dissolution of the monasteries and continued through Elizabeth's reign drove large numbers of peasants into the towns, to provide labour for the rapidly expanding wool industry. Others joined the army of "vagrants and sturdy beggars" who wandered up and down the country, persecuted by harsh laws. Among these were many minstrels, who had formerly enjoyed privileged status at the homes of the nobility.

Most of the artisans and tradesmen in the towns were the sons of peasants, retaining to a large extent their peasant outlook and traditions. Consequently, the songs of the new urban middle classes were directly derived from those of the rural peasantry.

Contemporary writers have described how traditional songs and traditional ways of singing were preserved in conditions of primitive capitalism. Thomas Deloney, the Elizabethan novelist and ballad-writer, has described the singing of a traditional ballad in his novel, *Jack of Newbury*:[9] "The spinsters and carders in dulcet manner chaunted out this song, two of them singing the Ditty, and the rest bearing the Burden." The ballad which follows is a traditional one, although it bears traces of Deloney's editing hand.

Elsewhere, Deloney has drawn a vivid picture of a weaving factory:

> "Within one room, being large and long,
> There stood two hundred looms full strong,
> Two hundred men, the truth is so,
> Wrought in these looms all in a row.
> By every one a pretty boy
> Sate making quills, with mickle joy,
> And in another place hard by,
> An hundred women merrily
> Were carding hard, with joyfull cheere,
> Who singing sate with voices cleere."[10]

Deloney was a typical handicraftsman of Elizabethan England, with a strong sense of patriotism and national pride, and an even greater pride in the skills and traditions of the weaving trade. He was a staunch Protestant, even a Puritan. His works reflect the life of Cheapside and Westminster, but he also has roots in the English countryside, in Norfolk and in Berkshire.

Deloney is an important figure, because, although

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he represents the urban middle classes to whom he dedicated his works, he was still close to the traditions of the peasantry, and he preserved several fine traditional ballads comparatively unaltered, as it seems.

To his contemporaries Deloney was better-known as a writer of popular ballads than as a novelist. Nashe refers to him somewhat contemptuously as "the balletting silk-weaver of Norwich". His ballads provide a good illustration of the differences between the traditional ballads handed down orally, and the printed broadside ballads, written chiefly for the entertainment of the urban middle classes.

Broadside ballads were printed in black-letter on long sheets, set to a popular tune, and sold up and down the country by pedlars and street-singers. Shakespeare knew them well; he has described them in *A Winter's Tale*:

> "What hast thou here? Ballads? . . . I love a ballad in print a-life, for then we are sure they are true . . ." "Here's one to a very doleful tune. How a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden, and how she longed to eat adders' heads and toads' heads carbonadoed."[11]

The subjects of broadside ballads covered a wide range. They included topical events, like the *Defeat of the Armada*; sensational stories, like the *Damnable Practices of Three Lincolnshire Witches*; legends; tales of heroes, such as Robin Hood; moral and religious tales; political propaganda.

The invention of cheap printing and the spread of literacy among artisans and craftsmen created a great demand for reading material. Considerable profit could be made from the sale of these ballads; their popularity during the second half of the 16th century can be judged from the number of entries in the Stationers' Register, in which they were officially licensed. We learn from Izaak Walton that they were often pasted on to the walls of inns.

In medieval times news was disseminated by wandering minstrels. In the 16th century, the broadside ballad replaced the minstrel in spreading news and information. In this respect, no doubt, they served a useful purpose. But, since their main object was to provide a quick profit for their authors and purveyors, it was inevitable that, like their successors the newspapers, they should tend towards exaggeration and sensation. The author of the broadside ballad always had his eye on the audience; his story was often overloaded with trivial detail, and he usually added a moral to make the ballad more saleable.

By contrast, the traditional ballads appear to be concerned simply with the objective narration of a story. They begin abruptly, "in the fifth act", as the poet Gray described it. The story is told dramatically, often in dialogue form, with frequent questions, exclamations and direct speech. Much is left to the imagination; the ballad may end as abruptly as it began; the end is very often tragic, and the evil-doer goes unpunished. The folk singer, unlike the writer of broadsides, does not moralise, although his attitude is usually one of profound human sympathy, combined with an underlying bitterness and hidden social satire. Folk ballads express the outlook of a peasant community, struggling against the hardships of life in feudal society.

In the traditional ballad, words and melody have evolved together, forming an integral unity. They interact upon each other, creating the subtle variations known as the "folk process". Broadside ballads, on the other hand, were arbitrarily set to some popular tune, often with considerable distortion of the words. Their metre was usually reduced to a monotonous jog-trot; characteristic features such as incremental repetitions and refrains tended to disappear altogether, since they would have taken up too much space on the printed page.

The difference between ballads of oral tradition and those that are printed has been well described by Evelyn Wells:[12]

> "Printing stops the creative process; the ballad you sing word for word and note for note from the page is someone else's version; the ballad you sing from memory and from your heart is subtly changed as it passes your lips, and, paradoxically, becomes your own as it leaves you."

A certain number of broadside ballads passed into the oral tradition; some, like *The Golden Vanity*, have survived up to the present day. These ballads have become subject to the processes of variation and selection by the community, and have taken their place in our heritage of folk song, as timeless examples of popular creation. But the majority of Elizabethan ballads are more ephemeral, and of interest mainly for the student of history, for whom they provide a fascinating social commentary.

When we turn to the tunes to which the broadside ballads were set, it is often difficult to establish their precise date. Sometimes a new ballad set to an old tune would replace the original words in popular favour; the tune might then become known by the name of the new ballad. This happened in the case of some of the ballads referred to by Shakespeare: *Greensleeves*, for instance, is the title of a ballad entered in the Stationers' Register in 1580, but the tune is probably of an earlier date. Like many other Elizabethan tunes, it is thought to be of Irish origin. Some tunes came to be known by several names: *Chevy Chase*, for example, is known as *Flying Fame*, while *The Hunt is up* is also known as *Pescodd Time*.

Many tunes were turned into dance tunes, for

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the Elizabethans had an almost insatiable appetite for dancing; they were published in various collections of pieces for lute and virginals, and in Ravenscroft's *Rounds and Catches*. The character of the tunes was considerably altered; they became more stylised and set in form. Separated from the words, they were no longer subject to the "folk process"; they did not, however, suffer the same deterioration as the words, since they were far less affected by the process of commodity production.

It would be wrong to over-simplify the musical changes of the 16th century. Yet it seems clear that the process which we have associated with the rise of the middle classes in the late Middle Ages was carried a stage further in the Elizabethan period. By the end of the 16th century, the typical popular song of the urban population was in a major or minor diatonic key, instead of a mode, and it had clearly-marked rhythm and well-balanced phrases. Although modal tunes continued to be sung in rural districts, they almost disappeared from the popular music of the towns, until the Irish immigrant labourers brought them back, after the industrial revolution.

In their new form, Elizabethan popular tunes provided the basis for the development of harmony. Although contrapuntal music continued to flourish in church music, and in the madrigals imported from Italy, there was a great increase in the composition of music in homophonic style, especially in the works of keyboard composers.

Popular Tunes in the Works of Keyboard Composers

The high level of musical education in Elizabethan England created a great demand for all kinds of vocal and instrumental music. The development of trade with Italy and Flanders led to the import of keyboard instruments, such as the virginals, a small keyboard instrument with plucking action, forerunner of the harpsichord. This instrument perhaps owes its name to its popularity with young girls; the emancipation of women of the bourgeois class led to a demand for instruments suitable for domestic use.

There are many collections of Elizabethan virginal music, of which the most important is the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, a manuscript collection dating from about 1620. It contains a number of popular tunes, with variations, set by different composers, which provide a good example of the melodic changes of the time.

Among these tunes are many to which broadside ballads were set, such as *Fortune my Foe*, *Goe from my Window*, and *The Hunt is up*. Although there is considerable variety, we can, I think, distinguish two main types of melody. The first, of which William Byrd's setting of *The Carman's Whistle* (I 214) is a good example, is in a major key, in triple rhythm, with trochaic accents. It consists of two well-balanced phrases, of which the first ends on the fifth, the second on the key-note. This tune, which is probably based on a street-cry, is typical of the music which we have suggested represents the rising middle classes during the late Middle Ages. Its lilting triple rhythm and gay major tonality resemble much of the popular music of the 12th and 13th century, such as Sumer is i-cumen in.

The second type of tune, of which Farnaby's *Quodling's Delight* (II 19) is a good example, is related to the *Searching for Lambs* melody.

It is necessary now to return to an analysis of examples of this family of tunes. We may base our analysis on thirty-three examples selected by the American musicologist Bertrand Bronson[12]. These include Gregorian chants of the 11th and 12th century; carols and ballads of the 15th and 16th century; ballads from 18th century Scottish collections; songs collected orally in England, Scotland and America during the 19th and 20th century. It appears that this melodic strain can be traced in the traditions of the English-speaking world over a period of at least nine centuries.

About half of Bronson's examples are in "parlando" style; the rest, chiefly dance tunes, are in "tempo giusto." Most of these date from the 16th and early 17th century; examples are taken from Ravenscroft's rounds, and from Playford's *English Dancing-Master* (1650).

One of the earliest examples appears to be the ballad *A Noble Riddle wisely expounded* (Child I). It is impossible to give an exact date, but from its content the ballad seems to be very ancient. The melody is in "parlando" style, in free, triple rhythm, with iambic stresses. It closely resembles a *Sanctus* from an 11th century mass, and is obviously related to plainsong.

If we compare this tune with that of *Goddesses* (Playford 44) we find a close resemblance in the melodic line. But the melody has been turned into a dance tune with strong trochaic accents, rounded phrases, melodic cadences, and sequences giving an exact formal balance.

The melody of Farnaby's *Quodling's Delight* is essentially the same as that of Goddesses, except that, whereas the latter is in the Dorian or Aeolian mode, with a flat seventh, Farnaby has sharpened the seventh so as to form the harmonic minor scale. This scale is practically unknown in English folk song before the 17th century.

In this form, the tune became well-known as *The Oak and the Ash*, or *The North-Country Maid*. A version in the major, with a jaunty march rhythm, has recently become popular in the folk clubs, thus

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completing the transformation of a modal, "parlando" style tune into its opposite.

Two further examples may be selected from Bronson's list. The ballad of *Walsingham* must be a very old one. The monastery at Walsingham, in Norfolk, was founded in the 13th century, and frequented by pilgrims from that date until its dissolution in 1538 by Henry VIII. Deloney published a version of the words in his *Garland of Goodwill* (1592), no doubt considerably altered from the original. The opening verses of the ballad, which is in dialogue form, are as follows:—

> "As ye came from the holy land
> Of Walsingham,
> Met you not with my true love,
> As by the way he came?
> How should I your true love know,
> That have met many a one?
> As I came from the holy land,
> That have both come and gone."

This, of course, is one of the snatches of song sung by Ophelia in her mad scene.

The tune of *Walsingham* was evidently very popular; there are many references to it in Elizabethan writers. We learn, for instance, that it was taught to singing-birds; it was also used for one of the *Psalmes and Songs of Sion, turned into the language and set to the tunes of a strange land* in 1642.

The melody has been handed down orally through the tradition of Shakespearean actresses; it was recorded in the 18th century from the singing of a Miss Field[14]. In this version, the opening phrase is identical with that of *Searching for Lambs*, except for the sharpened seventh, obviously added at some time between the 16th and 18th century. It seems most probable that this tune, in its original form, was in "parlando" style, in free, triple rhythm, in the Aeolian mode, with iambic stress.

There are two settings of *Walsingham* in the Fitzwilliam Book, by John Bull (I 1) and William Byrd (I 267). The melody of both settings differs from the Shakespearean version in several respects. It starts on the third note of the scale, and the second phrase ends on the third, harmonised in Byrd's version by the relative major chord. The final phrase in both settings contains a major third, so that the melody appears to end in the major. Byrd's version preserves the dialogue form of the ballad, by dividing the melody between the left and right hands at the keyboard.

The establishment of tonic and dominant harmonies at cadences, as employed by Bull and Byrd in their *Walsingham* variations, are an illustration of the way in which Elizabethan composers were searching for new forms of musical expression, especially in the field of harmony. The use of the sharpened seventh, or leading-note, in the minor key, was a new feature which led to important harmonic and structural developments.

Goe from my Window is a tune with an interesting history. There are several versions of this "night-visiting song" in oral tradition, including one collected in Norwich during the 18th century, which closely resembles the Shakespearean version of *Walsingham*. Other variants include a 6/4 version in Playford's *English Dancing-Master*, (*The New Exchange*); a Scottish singing-game (*Wha's at the windy wa'*); and a religious moralisation in Wedderburn's *Guid and Godlie Ballatis*. In the Fitzwilliam Book there are two identical versions, attributed to John Munday (I 153) and Thomas Morley (I 142). These are in the major key, in duple time, thus illustrating once again the transformation of a modal, "parlando" tune into a diatonic, rhythmically defined melody in duple time.

Many other examples could be given of the way in which diatonic melodies with rhythmically defined structures were replacing modal tunes and flexible rhythms. Major and minor tunes, offering the possibility of modulation and tonal contrast, expressed the spirit of adventure of the Elizabethans, while strongly-marked accents and dance rhythms were in harmony with their exuberant vitality. The development of harmony enabled composers to express a new range of human feelings, as contrasted with the impersonal music of the Catholic Church.

The 16th century was an age of transition, full of contradictions and conflicts. These contradictions are reflected in the music, which was also in transition between old and new forms. By the middle of Elizabeth's reign, the ascendancy of the bourgeoisie seemed assured; by this time, too, it was clear that the music associated with the bourgeoisie, which was mainly diatonic, rhythmical, and homophonic, would supersede the modal, unrhythmical, polyphonic style of music associated with the feudal forces, and particularly with the Catholic Church.

Changes in Church Music

Meanwhile, new forms were introduced into the music of the Reformed Church. Long before the Reformation, there had been a demand for the use of the vernacular in the services. This was vigorously opposed by the Catholic Church; the Reformed Church, on the other hand, made full use of the vernacular for hymns and psalms, in which the whole congregation was expected to join.

The Hussites in Bohemia, the Lutherans in Germany, and the Calvinists in Geneva, all saw hymn-singing as an indispensable part of church worship. For the Hussites, it was a part of the revolutionary struggle.

Luther's *Gesangbuch*, published in 1524, consisted of versified texts taken from the psalms or the New Testament, and set to German folk tunes. The

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earliest metrical version of the psalms for congregational use in England was Miles Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songs, drawen from Holy Scripture*. This was a translation from Luther, making use of the German tunes. The aim of the book, in Coverdale's words, was

> "to give our youth of England some occasion to change their foul and corrupt ballads into sweet songs and spiritual hymns in God's honour . . . As for the common sort of ballads, which are now used in the world, I report me to every good man's conscience, what wicked fruits they bring. Corrupt they not the manners of young persons?"[15]

Coverdale's book was suppressed and burned as Lutheran heresy by Henry VIII.

In Scotland the brothers Wedderburn produced *Ane Compendious Buik of Guid and Godlie Ballatis* in 1567. This consisted of religious moralisations of secular songs and ballads; it is an important source of information about the popular tunes of the time.

John Wedderburn was a priest, converted to Protestantism, who was forced to leave Scotland for Germany, where he was inspired "to translate many of Luther's dytements into Scottish meter", and "to turn many bawdie songs and rhymes into godlie rhymes." These "bawdie songs" include *John come kiss me*, *Fortune my Foe*, *The Hunt is up*, and many other Elizabethan favourites. As an example of the close resemblance of the moralised version to its original, we may quote the first verse of *The Hunt is up:*

> "The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
> And it is well-nigh day;
> And Harry our King is gone a-hunting,
> To bring his deer to bay."

Wedderburn's version is as follows:

> "With hunt-is up, with hunt-is up,
> It is now perfite day;
> Jesus our King is gaine in hunting,
> Wha likes to speed they may."

The *Guid and Godlie Ballatis* attained great popularity, and were published in several editions. In England Sternhold and Hopkins' metrical version of the psalms, first published in 1549, ran into an average of two editions every year for 150 years.

Contemporary writers have described the popularity of psalm-singing after the Reformation, both in England and Scotland. On March 3rd, 1556, Bishop Jewell wrote to Petrus the Martyr:

> "You may now sometimes see at St. Paul's Cross six thousand persons, old and young, of both sexes, all singing and praising God. This sadly annoys the mass priests and the devil, for they perceive that by these means the sacred discourses sink more deeply into the minds of men, and that their kingdom is weakened and shaken at almost every note."[16]

Psalm-singing spread across the Atlantic, too, for in *The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake*, published in 1628, we read that "the natives of North America took such pleasure in the singing of the Psalms that whensoever they resorted to us their first entreaty was commonly this, *Gnaah*, by which they entreated us we would sing'..[17]

(It is interesting to note the use of the word *Gnaah*, apparently describing the nasal quality of the singing. This word is still used in Ireland today, to denote the genuine folk style of singing; it is even applied to instrumental playing, and to types of music.)

The Reformation has been described as a mighty popularising force. The reformers aimed, above all, at attaining open intelligibility for all. One of the means by which they hoped to achieve this was through the use of the metres and rhythms of popular song; thus ballad metre came to be used for the metrical versions of the psalms, and for many hymns.

Cecil Sharp has stated that "although the church musician dipped freely enough into the people's music there is very little evidence of traffic in the reverse direction." This somewhat dogmatic statement has been corrected by Maud Karpeles, who adds a footnote:

> "Although the balance of indebtedness may be in favour of the church musician, it seems hardly likely that there was no influence in the other direction."[18]

During the Middle Ages the church borrowed from popular music for its psalms and hymns; secular tunes, like the famous *Westron Wynde*, were often introduced as Cantus Firmus into the mass. But it seems clear that the influence of folk song on plainsong was reciprocal.

Similarly, while the reformed church introduced folk songs and popular songs into the service to encourage congregational singing, the popularity of psalm-singing in turn had an influence on the style of popular songs. Deloney's *Strange Histories*, for instance, a collection of metrical versions of Holinshed's Chronicles, are directed to be sung to popular tunes such as *Fortune my Foe*; but, in addition, the 1602 edition prints original tunes, which are very similar to the tunes of metrical psalms.

When we compare the tunes of the metrical psalms with those of plainsong we find that the differences are similar to those between the popular Elizabethan songs and the traditional ballads: diatonic scales and measured rhythms replace modal melodies and unmeasured rhythms. It has been noted that it is precisely the lack of measured rhythm in plainsong which gives it its spiritual quality, removing it from the human categories of time into those of "other-worldliness".

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Beautiful as the plainsong melodies undoubtedly are, Elizabethan psalms and hymns have a dignity and strength which makes them a fitting expression of the Protestant faith, through which the collective voice of the rising bourgeois class made itself heard.

The Relevance of Elizabethan Popular Songs at the Present Time

The popular songs of Elizabethan England form an important link in the chain of English musical history. They were directly derived from the folk songs of the medieval peasantry, created by the common people of this country in feudal society.

Elizabethan popular songs were the product of the urban middle classes in the period of transition from feudal to capitalist society. The change from modal melodies and unmeasured rhythms to diatonic major and minor melodies and measured rhythms in a great deal of the music of this time reflects the social changes of the period of transition, and in particular the emancipation from the domination of the Catholic Church. These changes led eventually to the harmonic and structural developments of the great classical composers.

In spite of the changes, there is a strong continuity of tradition. As Cecil Sharp says: "The two streams of art music and folk music continued to flow side by side." The same melodic themes can be found in a medieval carol or ballad, in an 18th century ballad opera, in the virginal music of the Elizabethans, the songs of the Jacobean lutenists, and the dance music of Purcell.

At the turn of this century, Holst and Vaughan Williams set out to found a national school of music, founded on the newly-rediscovered English folk songs. In Vaughan Williams' music we recognise melodic themes which are at the heart of our English musical tradition. In 1934, long before the "folk boom" which is now sweeping the country, Vaughan Williams described folk music as "an art which grows straight out of the needs of the people, and for which a fitting and perfect form, albeit on a small scale, has been found by those people; an art which is indigenous and owes nothing to anything outside itself, and above all an art which has beauty and vitality now in the 20th century."[19]

During the 16th century, when capitalism was in its infancy, many of our traditional folk songs were replaced by broadside ballads, thus becoming a commodity. In spite of the inevitable deterioration caused by this process, much of the beauty and vitality of the tunes was preserved, because English folk song was still a living tradition, of which the Elizabethans were the immediate heirs. In their new form these tunes provided a basis for a tremendous development in the art of music.

The most striking feature of Elizabethan popular tunes is their vitality and gaiety. The period of transition to capitalist society brought suffering and misery for large numbers of English people. Nevertheless, for those who had been recently freed from serfdom, the Elizabethan age was one of great promise and golden opportunity. The radiant optimism of many Elizabethan tunes seems to express a firm belief in the future of humanity.

Ernst Meyer has referred to the remarkable unification of the hitherto warring forces of society which occurred in Elizabeth's reign. This unity was reflected in the national culture of that time. Meyer compared it with the unity of the British people in the struggle against Fascism. In 1942 he wrote:

> "Throughout history art has received a new stimulus from socially progressive forces. Who would not feel tempted to compare Elizabethan England with the England of the present day? As far as the art of music is concerned, the present phenomenal vogue of music, the enormous flowering and intensification of musical production, could hardly have been possible without the British people's heroic fight for progressive democracy and against reaction."[20]

Those of us who remember the musical renaissance of the war years may agree with these words; but they are unfortunately far from true today. The lack of unity in our society is reflected in the immense gulf between "serious" and "popular" music. The decay of capitalism is accompanied by a disintegration of some of the musical forms which were established in its early days. The destruction of the two most characteristically human elements in music—tonality and rhythm—may perhaps be a reflection of our society's lack of humanity. While avant-garde composers experiment with atonality, "pop" music reduces rhythm to a meaningless "beat".

In the race for profits, even our folk songs are debased and corrupted by commercial influences. If our culture is to survive, it is of the utmost importance that we should preserve our folk songs from commercialisation, and learn to understand them.

It is also necessary that new forms be developed, rooted in tradition, yet capable of expressing the needs of our complex modern society. In this field the Radio Ballads of Ewan MacColl, Charles Parker and Peggy Seeger are of profound significance.

We need an art which can help to unite the British people against the forces of reaction in the world today, against the system which, in the words of the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, "has sought to crush all hope in the future of humanity, replacing it with absolute despair".[21]

If we are to succeed in rescuing our culture from the degrading effects of commercialisation, we must build on all our finest traditions, in literature, art

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and music. Elizabethan popular songs are undoubtedly an important part of our national heritage. Their fresh melodies and robust rhythms express a vitality and hopefulness which may indeed be relevant for us in our struggle against the forces of decaying capitalism.

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13. Bertrand Bronson, *Journal of American Musical Societies*, III 3.
14. Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, p. 236.
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Artificial Intelligence

Frank Quelon

> "Sensation, thought, conciousness are the supreme product of matter organised in a particular way."—V. I. Lenin.
>
> (*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Ch. I, Section 2)

THE mechanisation of physical labour has transformed and is transforming human society before our eyes. This has been brought about by that which makes man unique —his intelligence. What if intelligence itself be mechanised?

The possibilities of artificial intelligence raise philosophical questions of the utmost importance and interest— especially for materialists, who, by definition, maintain that all thought necessarily has a material basis—which is the same as asserting that machines can in principle be constructed to do anything which the human brain does.

Some materialists may argue that the above qualification, "in principle" could conceal the unattainability in practice of certain "higher

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subtleties" of human thought. Whilst this view is necessarily speculative, there is often a reluctance to face the notion of ones finest mental experience consisting in "only" a pattern of electrochemical activity, somewhere deep down in the tangle of "grey matter". This reluctance may be in part due to a tendency to underestimate the potential subtleties in large organisations of simple elements.

From the Simple to the Sublime

A board with "only" 64 squares and 32 pieces provides seemingly endless fascination for millions. A game based on eight such boards in vertical array has not become popular— it is far too complicated (much more than eight times).

What could be simpler than 1 2 3 4 . . . ? Yet whole libraries of books exist devoted to the properties of this natural number series, a jungle which gets deeper and thicker, it is believed, without limit. Or take the familiar television picture, which consists of 380 lines, each line effectively a row of 500 dots, each of which can assume one of about 5 different brightnesses. The number of different possible arrangements of these dots is 5 multiplied by itself as many times as there are dots, that is 5 to the power of 380×500. This is a number with about 130,000 digits, compared with which the number of all the pictures which have ever been seen (usually 25 per second) by anyone on any television screen, is as a drop in an ocean.

Now the human brain contains about ten thousand million neurons (nerve cells—see sketch), each of them comparable in complexity to a large modern computer.

This is perhaps the most remarkable and least understood object in the universe. Objects tend to inspire a superstitious awe in inverse proportion to our understanding of them. To primitive man every pebble was mysterious. He progressed in understanding when he substituted curiosity for awe. Materialism's conscious rejection of the irrational clears the way to an endless richness of worlds, challenging exploration:

> This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the crowded heaven,
> And I said to my spirit *When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of every thing in them, shall we be fill'd and satisfied then?*
> And my spirit said *No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.*
>
> (Walt Whitman)

The Solid Ground of Nature

The impact of artificial intelligence on philosophy can be understood in the following way. Natural science made little progress before the advent of the "Scientific Method" (experiment plus materialism, in spite of the denials of many scientists who take 100 per cent materialism for granted in their daily work).

For precisely the same reasons, philosophy, the study of mind and knowledge, achieved only a wordy futility without *experimentation*.

> Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
> Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
> Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
> Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

Progress in understanding began with the first essays at experiment—with society, we recall Marx's profound remark that "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways" [i.e., only talked about it]. "The point, however, is to change it" [i.e., experiment with it]—in psychology (Pavlov), and now, with the advent of artificial intelligence, the "hardware" of mind, philosophy can descend from the mists to become part of the firm-grounded edifice of scientific knowledge.

The numerous exciting implications of artificial intelligence are penetrating further and further into the ramifications of human culture, so that an attempt to survey the whole subject in a short space is apt to turn out rather like a catalogue of exhibits than a story with a plot. If lack of space also precludes an adequate explanation of occasional technicalities, the reader should not worry, as long as a general picture emerges.

Information

Information is one of the elementary properties of matter, as are force and energy. Thinking is a process of transformation of information from an input, according to a prescribed set of rules, to produce an output. Both the set of rules and the output are also forms of information.

You put a latch-key in your front-door lock—you are inserting information contained in the shape of the metal of the key. You turn the key—the information is processed by the prescribed set of rules embodied in the levers inside the lock. The lock either opens or it doesn't, depending on what key you used. In other words, the information output of this thinking device is the reply to a question which has only two possible answers. This is conveniently taken as the unit or *bit* of information, as it is called. The key may possess ten or more bits of information. (Physically, an electronic gate nowadays is a rather refined speck of silicon, in appearance not

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unlike a grain of sand with fine wires attached to it).

A thinking device may have any number of bits of input information, and any number of bits in its output. When a scientist presses the button which starts the launching of a rocket, he is inserting only one bit, but a very large number of bits emerge from the apparatus.

Gates. If you imagine a large number of simple locks connected together, so that each actuates one or more others, which in their turn actuate still others, then you have the basic idea of logical networks. In a computer, the logical process whereby information is combined and converted takes place in a network of numerous simple elements called *gates,* nearly all of which give a one-bit output from an input of one to three bits (i.e., the outputs from one to three other gates). (Physically, an electronic gate normally consists of some half-dozen diodes and resistors, very small components which would go into a thimble).

Such a system is said to be a "two-state logic" system.

> Part of the activity of the animal brain and nervous system resembles two-state logic. The output from a neuron is in the form of a succession of pulses of equal intensity, but irregularly spaced in time, as in a code. The pulses travel along the neuron's axon, a fine thread branching out to hundreds of other cells. Other aspects of biological logic, such as the processes in the neurons which determine whether and when a pulse is emitted, are not so simple, and are only beginning to be studied.

Any arithmetical operation, however complex, can be built up from a large enough number of such elementary logical "bricks". The largest digital computers, costing millions of pounds, are constructed essentially out of tens of thousands of simple gates, interconnected with some form of information store or memory. The way in which they are connected is, of course, far from simple, and this accounts for most of the cost at present.

This cost will diminish without limit, along with all other production costs, as a result of automation, in so far as "cost" is a measure of the man-hours expended in production of a given article. Just as more machines are being produced *by* machines, already several large computer manufacturers are using computers to do a large part of the *design* of computers.

Any thinking device must comprise the following five main groups of functions:

(a) Input of information from the external world (punched cards, magnetic tape; sight, hearing).

(b) Memory. An obvious requirement for any but the very simplest of logical processes.

(c) Internal logic; various units which perform arithmetical or other logical operations on information.

(d) Output; available either as pure information in a useful form, or to perform a given task (steer a machine, contract a muscle).

(e) Programme. A scheme or set of rules to control the flow of information between the above.

It is the last category, Programming, which can be, as it were, the seat of "intelligence", however defined.

Exploration more or less at random, incorporated in the programmes of some modern computers, is, in as yet rudimentary form, what we call "imagination".

A computer can have its own programmes built into it. These are then the equivalent of "instinct" (for higher forms of life we also use the word "emotion") in the biological brain.

Learning. There is nothing to prevent a computer being provided with facilities for adjusting its own programme in such a way that it carries out a given task more successfully—i.e. learns from its own mistakes. Learning is of central interest and importance in anything to do with intelligence. Teaching machines are beginning to be heard of more now. Some of these machines adjust their instruction to the progress shown by the pupil, in the latter's replies to questions set. In this case, of course, both exhibit the capacity to learn.

From Quantity to Quality. Thus, some computers are provided with a capacity for self-adjustment or *learning,* and exploration or *initiative.* There is, of course, no question of anything approaching human consciousness in such machines. Anyone who doubts this should consider the following.

If we accept the number of elementary logical units as a criterion of the sophistication of a thinking system, then we can trace the evolution of the animal brain from practically zero in the most primitive living forms—through the barely visible speck of an insect's nervous system (up to perhaps 10^4 logical units); through fish, reptiles, mammals (a few ounces); the first hominids with 20-ounce brains—to *homo sapiens* with 50 ounces (about 10^{10} logical units).

Assuming that a working definition of "consciousness" could be agreed upon, then presumably the first conscious animal had a brain somewhere in that (now extinct) gap between 20 and 50 ounces. It would surely be strange if there were no *qualitative* changes over this millionfold

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quantitative range. No one knows what further changes are possible—perhaps some beings of the future will not regard us as conscious in some sublimer sense.

Incidentally, the problem of defining consciousness is an excellent example of certain awkward philosophical problems which can now be approached in a business-like way, in the light of the developing theory of logical nets—the new experimental philosophy.

The animal and human brains have, of course been the subject of extensive studies by workers in the biological field. More recently, as they grapple with problems of learning, pattern recognition and so forth, the respect of computer designers for the brain has steadily grown, and today in many research groups mathematicians are co-operating with biologists—in search of new ideas for computer design, as well as from interest in the brain itself.

Artificial intelligence has certain advantages over biological intelligence. Not being required to reproduce themselves automatically, artificial brains may be constructed using simple physical principles—that is, simple compared to living matter, permitting far greater speed of operation. They may also be highly specialised, so as to perform a particular type of task with a speed and precision quite unattainable by a human being.

Although computers can be far faster, the brain is outstanding for compactness, reliability and learning ability. This reliability is partly achieved by *"redundancy"* (i.e. duplication of components and functions) and other self-correcting processes.

The information required to specify the brains of lower forms of life, with relatively small brains, can be conveyed directly, genetically—reptiles, for instance, are born almost fully programmed. However, there is obviously a limitation on the quantity of information which can be conveyed genetically, and it is now believed that the brains of men and higher animals at birth consist largely of an "unorganised network" of elementary logical units—the raw material, as it were, of intelligence. As the individual grows, by a long-drawn-out process of trial and error (play), the tangled web weaves itself in such a way as to react to its environment according to the instructions of an hereditary guide or blue-print, which itself can be relatively simple. The more highly developed is the animal, the larger is the proportion of this pattern received directly via parental and social intercourse, rather than genetically.

It is hardly necessary to point out the sociological significance of this. We have the phenomenon of inertia in national and racial cultures; and yet human nature is potentially fluid to a degree which is widely underestimated. Contrary to the parroted "But you can't change human nature" familiar to propagandists of socialism, man can make himself what he chooses, within wide limits—brute-like or god-like—without waiting for a relatively slow genetic evolution.

Much attention is currently being directed to the learning process, in connection with computing systems able to "read" writing or "hear" speech.

At present, the input and output of computers are in the form of punched paper or magnetic tape. The ability to write, read, talk and listen would obviously open up a world of new applications for computers—letter sorting, language translation and interpreting, library information processing and so forth.

For thousands of years the human race struggled in vain to free itself from class exploitation. It took the mechanisation of physical labour to create the conditions for a breakthrough at last. This process—the first awakening of *collective* human consciousness—is likely to be further accelerated by another revolution, on the threshold of which we now stand—the revolution of the minute electronic components, ". . . organised in a particular way".

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This number contains a special section on "The United States of America Today", with articles by Gus Hall, Henry Winston, Hyman Lumer, Claude Lightfoot and Victor Perlo.

In another section "Theory and Practice of Socialism", articles by G. Kallai, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Hungarian People's Republic, and by C. R. Rodriguez, Minister of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, are of special interest.

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Discussion contributions on:

"The Thirties"

Reg Beech

ALICK WEST, in summing up the discussion on "the Thirties" at the History Group symposium, referred to the mistake of applying the term 'Social Fascists' to the Labour leaders. I think that it is a greater mistake to accept this without reference as to how this term arose. Johnny Campbell, summing up, said that this had been a disastrous term, neither distinguishing between leaders and rank-and-file, nor between leaders and fascists. In general I would agree that the term was loosely conceived and did not distinguish between Labour leaders and fascists. However I cannot personally recall any occasion when the term was applied to the rank-and-file or local leadership either in day-to-day discussion or in journalistic polemic. Our relationship with the Labour rank-and-file was at least as good as it is today, and, if judged by joint activities during the second half of the decade, was even better. At the beginning of the decade, long before the term Social-Fascist was ever employed, our meetings were occasionally broken up by Labour supporters as a result of hostility created by our mistaken Chartist programme. This antagonism broke down before joint activities against the Means Test and later against the rise of Fascism.

It is probable that the term 'Social Fascist' arose out of Manuilsky's pamphlet, *Social-Democracy, a stepping stone to Fascism*. This, of course was a world analysis, pointing out that the *policies* of certain Social Democratic leaders, in and out of office, had inevitably contributed to the rise of Fascism. Note for example the banner headline of the German Social-Democratic paper on the eve of Hitler taking over, in response to the Communist appeal for joint mass action, "Stay at home and take a bath". The culminating point in this step by step betrayal of Socialist policies came when many of these leaders in Germany, Italy, Austria and later France either openly embraced Fascism or held posts in Fascist administrations trying to implement them. Such names as Wels and Liepart in Germany, Belin, Georges Dumoulin and Marcel Deat in France spring readily to mind. The term Social-Fascist justly applied to these people.

But the wider questions remain:

1. Are we witnessing now a step-by-step surrender of Socialist principles to the demands of American Imperialism?

2. Would this surrender drag Britain behind America into an imperialist war?

3. Would the participation in such a war inevitably bring in its train Fascism—apart of course from the sheer nuclear lunacy of such a war?

The immediate and central problem therefore is how to resist the drive to war. Whilst we dare not alienate potential allies in this struggle, and must be careful not to employ loose phraseology, it would be equally criminal not to recognise that a party oriented towards the preservation of capitalism will inevitably follow the road of capitalism in its downward path to war and restriction of liberties. We see many signs of this in Britain today.

On the industrial side we see the T.U.C. falling over itself to co-operate with the Labour Government in trying to solve the economic difficulties of Capitalist Britain at the expense of wages, housing, education and medical care. Compare for example the words of the Gen. Secretary of the N.U.G.M.W., J. Cooper, speaking at a 'New Thinking' lunch given by the Industrial Welfare Society,

> "We are too smug about our industrial relations in Britain. In some ways they are very unsatisfactory indeed. There are workers who use their position in industry for political purposes, and *employers who resist at the centre and pander locally*. The problems of inflation and wage drift in the post-war period are due almost entirely to local wage bargaining and not central bargaining."

On the political side we see the undoubted gifts of Michael Stewart misused at the Oxford Teach-in to distort the facts in Vietnam and justify American intervention there. The present Labour Government is even more committed to American foreign policies than its predecessor.

Due to party loyalties and personal links it is impossible for the Labour Left to lead an all-out attack on these policies. In the last analysis only a party based on the replacement of capitalist society by a Socialist society can give the leadership capable of resolving these very dangerous problems. Of course we cannot translate this leadership into practical results alone. We need the widest co-operation of the whole Labour movement and progressive people to do this. We cannot get this support by abuse, but the final answer to this ultimately depends on how rapidly we can build an informed party membership.

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Rudyard Kipling Re-Estimated

D. Lesslie

When he went to tend the wounded under fire
With the bullets kicking dust spots in between.
'An for all his dirty hide
'E was white, clear white inside,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.

MANY a pre-1914 "swaddie" enjoyed this bit of Kipling, and if any lesson was imbibed it certainly ran counter to the white supremacy strain in Imperialism. It is not impossible for the same person to believe contradictory things, or, at least, things difficult to square with one another. The generation that built the Labour Party and forged the trade union movement had many houses decorated with pictures of Queen Victoria and the son or the man of the house accoutred in full Highland Regimental dress and medals. This is the sort of thing that has almost, if not quite, disappeared, although "A Scottish Soldier" or "A Gordon for Me" will still be sung with an uncomprehending gusto.

Kipling was one of a generation given a humanitarian education laced up with the conception that Britain's place was God-given for the advancement of the human race:

Take up the White Man's Burden, send forth the best ye breed,
Go, send your sons to exile to serve your captives need
By open speech and simple, an hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit and work another's gain.

—all in the spirit of "chastisement is good for the soul" and "it hurts me more than it hurts you",—

For Allah created the English, the maddest of all mankind,
They do not consider the meaning of things
They consult not creed nor clan,
Behold, they clap the slave on the back
And behold, he ariseth a man,
They terribly carpet the earth with dead,
And before their cannons cool
They walk unarmed by two's and threes
To call the living to school.

Perhaps Kipling did not realise it but were they not in this preparing for themselves numberless good black (or whatever) Englishmen ready to look to the Great White Father (Nyerere, Lumumba, etc.). We are afflicted with similar results in Scotland today—among the working class—but it is painless, like chloroforming, and when it cannot be seen here and now we can hardly blame Kipling if he did not know what he saw.

Kipling's Background

By his genteel background, public school education and relationships to the Baldwins and other Tory notabilities Kipling was perforce one of them. At the same time he was near enough the sons of the soil and with the necessity of making his own way in life to recognise that intellectualism, organising ability or ownership were not the determining factors in the activities of life:

Our England is a garden, and full of stately views
Of borders, beds, and shrubberies, and lawns and avenues,
Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made
By saying "Oh, how beautiful," and sitting in the shade,
While better men than we go out and start their working lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel paths with broken dinner knives . . .
And when your back is aching and your hands begin to harden
You will find yourself a partner in the Glory of the Garden.

—nor was he blind to how society was cast:

When Julius Fabricious, sub-prefect of the Weald
In the days of Diocletian owned our lower river field . . .
Then did robbers enter Britain from across the Northern main . . .
Till out a blossomed Normandy another pirate came . . .
Georgii Quinto Anno Sexto, I, who own the River-field
And fortified with title deeds attested, signed and sealed . . .
Called an ancient Hobden of the old unaltered blood . . .
His dead are in the churchyard, thirty generations laid,
Their names were old in history when Domesday Book was made
And the passion and the piety and prowess of his line
Have seeded, rooted, fruited, in some land the Law calls mine,

—Even "primitive accumulation", though he might not know the term, was recognised for what it was;

When they scratched the reindeer bone
Someone made the sketch his own,
Filched it from the artist—
Who shall doubt "the secret hid
Under Cheops pyramid"

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Was that the contractor did
Cheops out of several millions?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
On King Pharohs swart civilians?

This being the set-up there was little thanks for "the guardians of Empire", with the attitude of the ruling class reflected in the lowest echelons of the society;—

I went into a theatre, as sober as could be,
They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adnt none for me,
They sent me to the gallery, or round the music 'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord, they'll shove me in the stalls
For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that,
An "chuck him out, the brute,"
But it's "Saviour of 'is country"
When the guns begin to shoot.

While there were others of Kipling's class who could line themselves up with the demands for radical improvements in society and in the status and position of the working class, they were but few, and Kipling was not of them. He saw it rather as all pre-ordained and God-given;

The Sons of Martha favour their mother
Of the careful soul and the troubled heart.
And because she lost her temper once, and
Because she was rude to the Lord, her guest,
Her sons must wait upon Mary's sons,
World without end, reprieve or rest
And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessed—
They know the angels are on their side . . .
They sit at the feet, they hear the word,
They see how truly the Promise runs;
They have cast their burden upon the Lord,
—And the Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons.

Gladstone

The issues and the personalities of political life sixty or seventy years ago are difficult to recapture but it can be realised that "freedom-loving Liberals" (which included large sections of the working class) to whom Gladstone was the centre-piece, the fountain-head, of progressive thought would be incensed and furious at any denigration of their Grand Old Man, or his Party. To find them scorched by Kipling was inevitably to throw him into the camp of the enemy. The Parnell Commission uncovered or appeared to, association of the Liberals with the assassins of Phoenix Park:

Hold up those hands of innocence,
Go, scare your sheep together,
The blundering tripping tups that bleat
behind the old bell-wether[1]

[1] Gladstone.

They only paid the Moonlighter his cattle hocking price
They only helped the murderers with Counsel's best advice,
They only said "intimidate", and talked and went away,
By God, the boys that did the work were better men than they,
My soul, I'd sooner lie in jail for murder plain and straight
Pure crime I'd done with my own hands for money, lust or hate,
Than take a seat in Parliament, by fellow-felons cheered,
While one of those "not provens" proved me cleared as you are cleared,
If print is print or words are words the learned Court perpends:—
We are not ruled by murderers, but only by their friends.

Kipling's was a keen perception of the relationship between individuals and people in their immediate groupings, of the work of the doers in the changing of the world, with no concessions to theories of where this might go:

Strong lust of gear shall drive him forth and hunger arm his hand,
To win his food from desert rude his pittance from the sand . . .
There he shall blaze a nation's ways with hatchet and with brand,
Till on his last won wilderness An Empire's outpost stand.

He could admire the trees without judging the effect of the jungle they were creating.

The Boer War

From this came an enthusiasm for the sweeping away of the tyrannies and obstructionism of the Boer rule, missing altogether the concomitant assertion of Britain's Imperialism. There was much general enthusiasm and popular support for the Boer War among the workers of Britain, Kipling differing little from general opinion. The foundation for this can be seen in his comment to Rhodes; "They (the Boers) want to sweep England into the sea, to lick their own niggers and to govern South Africa with a gun instead of the ballot-box. It is a question of which race is to govern the country". It might well have been impossible for Socialist or progressive opinion of the day to do other than condemn Kipling. Now that the tumult and the shouting has died down we can afford to look a little more dispassionately at what he really said, and why. Perhaps Britain's victory at that time delayed for sixty years this South African achievement, and only now, with Tory approval, has it been realised. I do not seriously put that forward but we could well think how Kipling saw the dangers:

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And when your goal is nearest, the end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly bring all your hopes to naught

—and again:

Likewise the Lords of Looseness that hamper faith and works
The Perseverance-Doubters, the Present-Comfort Shirks,
And brittle intellectuals who crack beneath the strain.

Amidst the mass of plain commonsense and observation that he turned into verse had he been really read there was much that could have been used in an anti-ruling class way:

Yea, though we sinned, and our rulers went from righteousness,
Deep in all dishonour though we stained our garments hem . . .
We were led by evil counsellors—the Lord shall deal with them.
Walk wide o the Widow at Windsor
For 'alf o creation she owns,
We 'ave bought 'er the same with the sword and the flame,
An' we've salted it down with our bones.
(Poor beggars, it's blue with our bones)
There's 'er nick on the cavalry 'orses,
There's 'er mark on the medical stores—
An' 'er troopers you'll find
With a fair wind be'ind
That takes us to various wars
(Poor beggars, barbarious wars).

Again, we understand, the Queen was not amused. His refusal to accept the Poet Laureateship might well have been read as a criticism, even if it was aimed mainly at Gladstone, who had the disposal of the honour:

The King has called for priest and cup,
The King has taken spur and blade
To dub True Thomas a belted Knight,
And all for the sake of the songs he made . . .
"I hae harpit ye up tae the Throne o' God
I hae harpit ye're midmost soul in three,
I hae harpit ye doon tae the Hinges o' Hell—
And *ye* wad mak a Knight o' *me*."

It is indeed a poor show if would-be critics have to be enticed to look at Kipling by assurances that the poetasters of the Soviet Union have cast a favourable eye towards him. Marxist critics are not easy to come by and the few we do have, I fear, set their sights and judgements by accepted critical standards.

There is a lot more than obliviousness to economic exploitation in Kipling and there is little working class, even though, to the horror of the critics, he introduced working class forms of expression and language. To these critics he remained only "a minor poet certified by Traill", and fifty-first one on the list, at that. Search as one will there is no indication that the working class, as such, exists at all, the city, the town, the collective opinions thrown together by industry or marketing are non-existent. There is much to be said for the thought he penned to a friend:

> "I don't believe very much in my genius. My own notion being rather that I am set to do Ferguson for some like-to-come-along Burns whose little finger will be thicker than my loins. At least I have shown him his lead."

There is an allusion there that should be understood in Scotland at least, but the times are not Burns' and the possibilities of getting over that expression by a working class Burns needing to run the gauntlet of critics and publishers holding fast to Augustan or Audenist moulds they would crib this Burns into, would give him a bigger job than McDiarmid had. When will they learn that when Burns comes along he won't be so mightily different or recognisable from numerous other scribblers or working class versifiers of this generation:

When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre
'E'd 'eard men sing by land and sea,
An' what he thought 'e might require
'E went an' took, the same as me.
The market-girls an' fisher men,
The shepherds an' the sailors, too,
They 'eard old songs turn up again,
But kep' it quiet—the same as you.
They knew he stole, 'e knew they knowed,
They didn't tell, nor make a fuss,
But winked at 'Omer down the road,
An' 'e winked back, the same as us.

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